

A CRITICAL  
DISSERTATION  
UPON  
*HOMER's Iliad.*

WHERE,  
Upon Occasion of this POEM, *A*  
*New System of the Art of Poetry* is at-  
tempted, founded upon the Principles of  
Reason, and the Examples of the most il-  
lustrious Poets, both ancient and modern.

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By ABBE TERRACON,  
A Member of the Royal Academy of Sciences.

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V O L. II.

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PART III.  
*Of the Manners and Characters in the  
ILIAD.*

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SECT. II.  
*Of the Manners of the Gods.*

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Don't think it necessary to repeat here what the ancient Authors, whether Sacred or Profane, have wrote against the fabulous Deities, especially such as *Homer* has represented them. With respect to the Sacred or Ecclesiastical Authors, this is no Book of  
B Theo-

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Theology, and therefore their Authorities not so proper to be produc'd, or refer'd to here, tho' I foresee Madam *D.* will oblige me sometimes to have recourse to them; and for the prophane Authors, tho' I won't neglect their Authority, which is strong against our present Adversaries, and all the Admirers of the *Pagan* Theology, yet I intend here to write as much as possible purely in the Philosophical Way, determining by Reason all those Particulars which Reason is capable of deciding. After all, I own, that whereas in all the other Heads, I rather attack *Homer* than Madam *D.* here on the contrary I rather attack her in Conjunction with Mr. *D.* and *F. Bossu*, than *Homer*: And indeed the Ignorance of the Age in which *Homer* liv'd, and the Darknesh of Paganism, with which he was surrounded, render him, in some Measure excusable; but 'tis astonishing that in an Age where Religion and Decorum are so well known, and so exactly understood, any should attempt the vindicating such ridiculous and absurd Representations and Characters of Deities, who espouse the right or wrong Side, only as Fancy and Caprice determine them; who quarrel and fight; in a Word, who are guilty of all possible Follies



### upon HOMER's Iliad. 3

Follies and Immoralities. These monstrous and gross Absurdities were highly displeasing and disagreeable to *Homer's* greatest Friends and Admirers, even among the *Pagans*; for not to mention *Plato*, *Cicero*, and several others, who have absolutely condemn'd him on this Head, even those who have undertaken to excuse him, such as *Aristotle*, *Plutarch*, *Longinus*, have sufficiently shewn their Diffidence and Perplexity, by the humble Expressions they make use of on this Occasion, and by their insinuating that *Homer*, after all, might indeed have treated this Subject better. *Plutarch* especially applies to him the Verse that occurs more than once in the *Iliad*,

*Novisti & alium sermonem meliorem hoc  
excogitare.*

Yet to give up and condemn *Homer* in the Article of his Deities, as the greatest Men of all Ages have done, is granting us a greater Advantage against him, than at first we are probably aware of; for 'tis impossible that immoral and vicious Characters of Deities, which so often occur, and are so frequently repeated, as those in the *Iliad*; should not corrupt the whole Poem in its most noble and essential Parts;

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*viz.* even all those which relate to Religion and Morality. And therefore neither does Madam D. yield this Particular; but of whatever Nature or Kind the Discourses and Actions of *Homer's* Deities are, their Justification, nay often their Praise, is always ready at Hand. We have two Things therefore to do in this *Section*; First, sufficiently to demonstrate the Wickedness, the Injustice and Impiety of all *Homer's* Deities, and especially his *Jupiter*; and, Secondly, to shew not only the Vanity, but Impiety of all the Apologies and Excuses, but especially the Encomiums and Praises made for him on this Head by his Admirers.

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#### CHAP. I.

*Homer's Variation and Inconstancy in his Notions and Ideas of the Greatness and Power of Jupiter.*

**B**Efore we prove the Wickedness and Impiety of the Gods of the *Iliad*, it may be proper to shew that the Confusion of *Homer's* Notions and Ideas is extended even to what concerns the Power and Greatness of *Jupiter* himself, which

is

## upon HOMER's Iliad. 5

'tis commonly thought he had carried by the Sublimity of his Expressions to the highest Point humane Thought or Imagination could reach. In the first Book of the *Iliad* (*Vol I. p. 26.*) *Achilles* says to *Thetis*; "I remember to have heard you  
 " often boast in my Father's Palace, that  
 " you alone had sav'd *Jupiter* from the  
 " greatest Danger he was ever in, when  
 " the other Gods, *Juno*, *Neptune* and *Minerva*  
 " had resolv'd to bind him; you  
 " then prevented the Effect of this  
 " Conspiracy, and preserv'd him from  
 " Chains and Bonds, by calling upon  
 " the Giant with an hundred Hands,  
 " whom the Gods call *Briareus*, and Men  
 " *Egeon*, who being stronger than his Father  
 " *Neptune*, plac'd himself near *Jupiter*,  
 " and put on so fierce and terrible  
 " an Aspect, that the Gods frighten'd,  
 " desisted from their Undertaking".

Madam D. in her *Preface* (*p. 16 and 17.*) has these Words: "'Tis the same  
 " as to the Punishments, Wounds and  
 " Imprisonments of the Gods, and the  
 " Fall of one of them thrown headlong  
 " down from *Olympus*; for we must consider,  
 " that *Homer*, speaking thus of the  
 " Deities, always excepts the Supreme,  
 " and only makes the inferiour Ones obnoxious  
 " to these Accidents and Mis-



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“ fortunes, *i. e.* the Angels, whom the  
“ Scripture also calls Gods”. ’Tis true,  
that in the Passage of *Homer*, above  
produc’d, *Jupiter* don’t indeed fall from  
*Olympus*; but to whom does he owe the  
Favour and Obligation? Only to an  
inferiour and subordinate Goddess, who  
assisted him and prevented it; and who  
could not have help’d him neither, with-  
out the concurrent Assistance of the  
Giant, who I think was never yet  
reckon’d in the Number of the Gods.  
This is the first Idea *Homer* gives us of  
his *Jupiter*; for he always begins with  
shewing his Persons in a Light very pro-  
per to create Esteem and Veneration for  
them in his Readers: and this is also the  
first Argument *Homer* furnishes us with  
against the general Notion they would  
find in his *Iliad*, of a First and Supreme  
Being, the Maker, Governour and Di-  
rector of all created Minds. Accord-  
ingly Madam D. forgetting what she had  
said in her *Preface*, of *Jupiter*, or the Su-  
preme God, being always excepted from  
such Misfortunes which the other Deities  
were obnoxious to, says upon Occasi-  
on of the Passage now before us, “ That  
“ *Homer* speaks here of *Jupiter* as of a  
“ King they would have dethron’d; and  
“ to justify, adds she, these kind of Fa-  
bles,

upon HOMER's Iliad. 7

bles, which we are to consider as Parts  
of the *Pagan* Theology, we need only  
consult the Notes upon the 26th Ch.  
of *Aristotle's Art of Poetry*. i. e. That  
in the 26th Ch. of *Aristotle's Art of Poetry*,  
Mr. D. excuses or praises *Homer*  
for doing what Madam D. affirms in her  
*Preface*, he never had done. One might  
be apt to think that *Homer's* View, in  
relating those absurd Fables, was only to  
turn *Jupiter*, and all the other Deities,  
into Ridicule, as *Lucian* did afterwards;  
and thus in a sly and indirect Manner to  
attack their Existence. Upon this Prin-  
ciple undoubtedly one might explain  
most Things in the *Iliad*: But I see again  
other Passages where *Homer* endeavours  
to raise and exalt his Deities, and espe-  
cially *Jupiter*, with all the Spirit and  
Force of his Poetry; which makes me  
think that his Intention was different.  
Yet in what do all these Efforts termi-  
nate? Indeed in a very small Matter, at  
least for Persons of any Judgment and  
Taste. The Frowns of *Jupiter* may make  
all *Olympus* shake, (p. 34.) but I must  
lose all the Esteem and Veneration I have  
for this Deity, as soon as I call to Mind  
the great Risque and Dangers he has e-  
scap'd, and what it was prevented his be-  
ing in a very different State and Condi-

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tion. What signifies *Homer's* giving *Jupiter* that glorious and external Form and Appearance which has been so much admir'd, that Bodily Strength of which he continually boasts, \* if in the Course of the Poem *Juno* † and *Neptune* ‡ call in doubt his Power, and form Designs against his Will and Pleasure when plainly and positively declar'd? But let us enter upon our principal Design, and examine *Homer's* Deities by their Conduct,

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### CHAP. II.

*Of the Unjust and Malicious Characters  
Homer gives all his Deities, and particularly Jupiter.*

### SECT. I.

*Jupiter's Condescension and Grant to Thetis of her unjust Request. Thetis' Deceit and Fraud with respect to Agamemnon.*

**T**HE Action of the Gods in the *Iliad*, i. e. all the Marvellous and Supernatural Part of the Poem, begins with

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\* B. 8. p. 35. and elsewhere.

† B. 8. p. 47.

‡ B. 15. p. 357.



upon HOMER's Iliad. 9

the Complaint *Achilles* makes to his Mother, the Goddess *Thetis*, of the Injury he had receiv'd from *Agamemnon*. This Madman, (of whom we should not have requir'd the revenging of Injuries by glorious Actions, for which Madam *D.* commends *Diomedes*, (B. 1. p. 435.) and to whom we shou'd have easily pardon'd the Revenge that had only personally concern'd *Agamemnon*,) carries his Passion higher, and says to his Mother, (B. 1. p. 27.) " Make *Jupiter* call to Mind the  
" great Services you have done him ;  
" and embracing his Knees, endeavour  
" to engage him to assist the *Trojans*, and  
" to permit that the *Greeks* be repuls'd,  
" and shut up in their Vessels. *Thetis*  
" answers him, (p. 16.) I'll be sure to  
" mention to the Sovereign of Gods and  
" Men, every thing I can think of most  
" proper to engage him hereunto : Yet,  
" my Son, don't stir from your Ship, but  
" continue to shew the *Greeks* Marks of  
" Resentment, by forbearing to fight.  
Upon another Passage in the 18th B.  
(p. 463.) Madam *D.* says, " That *Thetis*  
" was not animated with the same Spirit  
" of Revenge as her Son : This, adds  
" she, had been too contrary to all De-  
" corum and good Manners, for a God-  
" dess to authorize Revenge by her Ex-  
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“ ample; on the contrary, she endeavours to inspire him with Sentiments more worthy them both, by insinuating that it would be Great and Glorious for him to assist the *Greeks* in the Extremity they were now reduc'd to”.

After such a Remark as this, I ought to yield to Madam *D.* the Privilege and Advantage of attacking *Homer*; for I can't make either a stronger or juster Criticism of the Passage in the first Book, where the same *Thetis* justifies her Son's Revenge against the *Greeks*, who were very innocent, as we shall see in what follows, of *Agamemnon's* Crime.

*Thetis* carries *Achilles's* Complaint to *Jupiter*; and the vicious Indulgence and Affection which the Supreme God had for this Goddess, who here solicits him for the unjust Ruin and Destruction of the *Greeks*, makes him return her the following Answer. “ What a Series of fatal Miseries and Misfortunes, says he, (p. 34.) are you going to occasion, by obliging me to quarrel with *Juno*, who won't fail to provoke me with her usual Complaints, that are always full of bitter Invectives? For she never loses an Opportunity of Quarrelling, and being in a Fury and Passion with me, tho' in the Presence of all the other  
“ ther

upon HOMER's Iliad. II

"ther immortal Deities ; and she continually reproaches me with favouring the *Trojans*. But be gone, lest she should see you ; and I'll take care to bring about and accomplish what you desire."

Would not one imagine they hear some mean Mechanick speak, to whom there was propos'd some drunken Match or Appointment ; and how instead of excusing himself upon the account of his Affairs, and what he owes to his Family, only alledges the Noise and Clamours of his Wife ; yet poorly yields to the Solicitations of his Comrades whom he sends away before, lest she should see him go abroad with them ; yet saving to himself the Privilege tho' perhaps, when he returns, of threatening to beat her, if she should break his Head ; as indeed *Jupiter* does here actually, towards the End of the same Book ?

But setting aside the Meanness of the Discourse, and not examining the Thing in itself, the Poet himself here owns the Injustice of *Thetis*' Prayer, and expressly gives it the Epithet of ἐξαισιόη (p. 598) which Dr. Barnes very well translates in his Edition, by the Word *Iniqua*.

*Thetidis autem iniquam Supplicationem  
ut totam perficeret.*

Madam

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Madam *D.* the better to soften and mitigate the Thing, has thought fit only to call it an ambitious Prayer. "*Jupiter*, says she, (*Vol. II. p. 382.*) " that he " might accomplish the irrevokable Promise he made to *Thetis* when he heard " her ambitious Prayer, resolv'd to " crown with Glory the valiant *Hector*." This don't at all mend the Matter, and it still appears clear and certain, that *Jupiter*, according to *Homer*, protects and patronizes Injustice; and even, according to Madam *D.* the Ambition of an inferior Goddess, when he shou'd only have check'd and rebuk'd both the one and the other. Upon Occasion of the Oath which *Jupiter* makes to *Thetis*, of revenging *Achilles*, and which he confirms by a Nod of his Head, Madam *D.* says (*1. 321.*) " That *Homer* knew this " Truth, That the Head was the Seat " of Reason and Wisdom; and that he " hereby teaches that whatsoever the " Head approves, should be kept sacred " and immutable; and that no Equivocation, nor mental Reservation shou'd " ever dispense Men from performing " what they have once promis'd". *Homer*, who had none of Madam *D.*'s Views, never once thought of all this; neither does the *Greek* Language ever express so many



upon HOMER's Iliad. 13

many Ideas in one single Word: But with respect to Madam D's Maxim, I say that it is not true, but when the Promise it self is just; for if it is otherwise, not only we may be excus'd, but we are even absolutely forbid to perform it: And according to the Principles of true Morality, for which Madam D. wou'd seem here so zealous and concern'd, to perform an unjust Oath, like this of *Jupiter*, is only to add one Crime to another. The Advantage and Conveniency of the critical or commenting Stile, to say whatever one has a mind to, has likewise occasion'd this other Remark of Madam D. upon *Jupiter's* Words to *Thetis*. (1. 34.) "I'll take care to  
"accomplish what you desire. *Homer*  
"teaches us here, *says she*, (1. 321.)  
"That no Reason drawn from the Interest of our Families, should ever  
"prevent us paying our Benefactors the  
"Acknowledgments we owe them for  
"Services they have done us". If Madam D. had ever studied the Elements of Morality in more exact and judicious Authors than *Homer*, she would have known that generally in such Cases, the strict and essential Duties, such as the Care of a Family that depends upon us, or to which we belong, always  
take

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take Place before the Duties of Decorum and Convenience, such as the Marks and Tokens of Acknowledgment and Civility towards a Stranger ; and particularly, that it is a certain and eternal Truth, that the just Concerns and Interests of a Family, of which we are the Head, and have the Direction and Management, are always and every where preferable to the unjust and fantastical Desires of a Benefactor : Thus the Peace and good Order which *Jupiter*, as Supreme, shou'd have maintain'd among the other inferiour Deities, was far preferable to the capricious and unjust Revenge which *Thetis*, his Benefactress, here desires of him. But Madam *D.* seems to be of the Opinion of those Persons who think, that provided they heighten and overcharge our Obligations, they can't err in Matters of Morality ; not considering that any Excess of Weight, either upon the one or the other Side of the Ballance, destroys the *Equilibrium*. Mr. *D.* was guilty of the same Mistake, when upon the Principles of a *Pagan* Philosopher, *viz.* in his Translation of *Plato*, he undertook to decide a Case of Conscience, of no less Importance than what related to the Loss or Preservation of humane Life.

Upon

*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 15

Upon Occasion of *Socrates*, who would not make use of the Means his Friends furnish'd him with of escaping out of Prison, *Madam D.* maintains, that 'tis not lawful for us to make our Escape when we can, from a Sentence of Death, tho' unjustly pass'd: as if eternal Truth and Wisdom, who commands us to fly from Persecutions, had excepted the Case where the Sentence of Persecutors was already pass'd. But since *Mr. D.* engages me by his Example to treat such Sort of Subjects in a Work like this, and submitting his Decision and my own to proper Judges; I maintain, that without a particular Inspiration of GOD, as that which authoriz'd *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*, whose Example *Mr. D.* alleges and pleads, or without Reasons equivalent to such an Inspiration, we are oblig'd to make our Escape from the Hands of our Persecutors, when 'tis in our Power, without being guilty of any Lye, Fraud, or other Immorality; and this principally for two substantial Reasons: One is, That we should not tempt GOD, by exposing our selves to a violent Death which we might have avoided; and the other is, That we may thus hinder our Persecutors from being yet more guilty, by giving the finishing Stroke and Accomplishment to  
their



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their Crime. Thus much for a Man unjustly persecuted. To decide now if 'tis lawful for a Criminal, justly convicted, to make his Escape out of Prison, if open to him, is another Question, to which I will say nothing here. We may see sufficiently from what preceeds, that Severity in all moral Cases should be actuated and directed by Reason, for want of which, it only becomes cruel, if not fatal; and as it has been said of some of the best of Men, they had better transgress'd in the other Extream of Indulgence. The Excess of this only proceeds from a too great Condescension to Nature; but a blind and cruel Severity can neither alledge Nature nor Religion in its Excuse and Vindication. In general, we shou'd not think that upright Intentions and pious Sentiments are sufficient Qualifications to capacitate any to decide Cases of Conscience, or propose Rules of Morality, or explain the Articles of the Christian Faith, or the Sense of the Holy Scriptures, without having first sufficiently studied the Body of Divinity, made a long particular and profound Study of Theology, and perhaps also without having receiv'd and learn'd its true Principles in the publick Schools, which are founded and instituted and authoriz'd  
for

upon HOMER's Iliad. 17

for this Purpose ; because, according to a Maxim I learn'd from my Teachers, 'tis there principally we learn the Use the Church intends we should make of the Holy Scriptures and Fathers. But let us now see the Manner in which *Jupiter* observes the two Precepts of *Madam D.* in the fulfilling his Oath, and giving his Benefactors Marks of his Acknowledgment and Gratitude.

" *Jupiter*, deliberating with him-  
" self about the surest and quickest  
" Means to raise *Achilles'* Glory, and  
" make the *Greeks* fly before the *Tro-*  
" *jans*, at last determines to send a  
" false and lying Dream to the Son of  
" *Atreus*. He calls then upon this  
" Dream, and says to it; Thou se-  
" ducing Dream, go quickly to the  
" *Grecian* Fleet, and enter the Tent of  
" *Agamemnon*, and tell that Prince all  
" that I am going to order thee. Com-  
" mand him, that he make the *Greeks*  
" to Arm, and that he put all the  
" Troops in the Order of Battle;  
" give him to understand, that this  
" is the Day in which he will be-  
" come Master of the great City of  
" *Troy*; that the immortal Gods, who  
" inhabit in high *Olympus*, are no  
" longer divided; that *Juno* has at last

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" pre-

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“prevail’d upon them by her importunate Prayers and Supplications; and that the last Ruin is now impending over the Heads of the Trojans.” Instead of these last Words, *and the last Ruin is now impending over the Heads of the Trojans*, τρωέσσιν ὃ κῆδος ἐπὶ κεφαλῇ, there was heretofore in the Greek *δίδομεν ὃ τοι εὖχῃ ἀπέσθαι*, which literally signifies, *and we give him leave to reap some Glory*. Nothing could be more contrary to Jupiter’s Thought and Design; and even the Pagans have accus’d Homer of making him guilty of Fraud and Deceit, intirely unworthy of the Supream Deity. Aristotle (in the 26th Ch. of his *Art of Poetry*) here justifies Homer, after Hippias of Thasos, by a changing the Accent, which gives to *δίδομεν* an Imperative Signification. Homer, who uses all Dialects, never yet us’d *δίδομενα* in this Sense: On the contrary, this imperfect Phrase, with several others, is a Form repeated in the Indicative Sense (in B. 21.) where Neptune and Minerva say to Achilles, *δίδομεν ὃ τοι εὖχῃ ἀπέσθαι*, (p. 297.) which Madam D. translates, very justly, thus: *We will pour down Glory upon you in that Day.* (p. 226) But besides, even in the Imperative Sense,



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Sense, the Phrase can never signify *promising him that he shall reap and obtain Glory*, but *causing him to do so*; which is very different and very remote from *Jupiter's Design*. Lastly, Even supposing the Phrase should signify what is pretended, the Correction would be more injurious to his Moral Attributes, since in this Case *Jupiter* would still command a Lie, which is much worse than to practise it. This is therefore only one of those shuffling and evasive Answers, that may serve *Madam D.* to say *she has answer'd*; but which won't make her Reader say, *I'm satisfied*. And indeed, this Correction appear'd so little satisfactory, that notwithstanding even *Aristotle's* Authority here, who approves it, the half Verse to which it belongs has been now for a long Time expunged and omitted in all the Copies.

Whatever Concern and Esteem *Madam D.* shews for this half Verse, when she says, (l. 331.) "That to save the Poet they have chang'd his Text by a pious Fraud; and that this false Criticism has so far prevail'd, that there would remain no Footstep of the ancient Reading, if *Aristotle* had not preserv'd it". Yet she has fol-

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lowed, in her Translation, the half Verse which was inserted and substituted for the true ancient Reading. And I here follow it myself, since I only cite Madam D's Translation. But this last Correction don't prevent the Discourse, tho' so alter'd, appearing very detestable and odious to all those who with *Homer* had preserv'd in his *Jupiter* some Idea and Image of an infinitely true, just and perfect Being, a God of Justice and Truth. Mr. and Madam D. are far from thinking *Homer* had offended against any of those Divine Attributes in the present Fiction; on the contrary, the one in his *Remarks up on the Art of Poetry*, (452, 453.) the other in her *Preface to Homer* (21, 22.) sayeth, That the Holy Scripture furnishes us with a parallel Instance in the History of King *Ahab*, when God would have him destroy'd at *Ramoth Giliad*. Here follows the whole Passage as cited by Mr. D. 'tis in the 22d Ch. of the 1 B. of *Kings*.  
 " God says, Who will intice *Ahab*,  
 " King of *Israel*, to go up against *Ra-*  
 " *moth Giliad*, and perish? And one  
 " said in this Manner, and another said  
 " on that Manner; then there came  
 " forth a Spirit, and stood before the  
 " Lord, and said I will persuade him.  
 " And

upon HOMER's Iliad. 21

“ And the Lord said wherewith? And  
“ he said, I will go forth and be a lying  
“ Spirit in the Mouth of his Prophets.  
“ Then he said, thou shalt intice him,  
“ and shalt prevail: Go forth and do  
“ so.” There's nothing so like, *says*  
*Mr. and Madam D. hereupon.* “ *Homer's*  
“ *Jupiter* is no Lyar nor Seducer in this  
“ Passage, no more than the true God  
“ is in the History of *Ahab*. But *Ho-*  
“ *mer* knew this Truth, that God often  
“ makes use of the Wickedness of Men  
“ to accomplish his Judgments; and  
“ there was only wanting the Change  
“ of an Accent in his Phrase, to ren-  
“ der it agreeable to that of the Holy  
“ Scripture.”

But first, even suppose *Homer's* Phrase  
and Expression was like that in the  
Holy Scripture, this would not at all  
justify the Poet, because the Stile of the  
Scripture is not always to be taken li-  
terally, as *Homer's* must be. With re-  
spect to this Expression in the Scrip-  
ture, *F. Calmet*, who has very learnedly  
and judiciously collected, and exactly  
digested, whatever the Catholick Com-  
mentators, the *English* Criticks, and  
even the *Rabbins* have publish'd, most  
remarkable upon these Books, inter-  
prets it thus: “ When God says here to



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“ the Devil, *Egretere, & fac ita*, go and  
 “ do as thou hast said; it is not that he  
 “ commands him to seduce, to lye, or  
 “ to deceive; nay, nor properly speak-  
 “ ing, does he so much as permit or  
 “ approve it: Only he don’t hinder  
 “ it; he lets the Devil exercise his  
 “ wicked Will and Inclination against  
 “ those he would try or punish. What  
 “ is express’d in the Scripture by the  
 “ Imperative Mood, don’t always im-  
 “ ply a Command or Approbation: For  
 “ Example, when God says to *Isaiah*,  
 “ make the Heart of this People fat,  
 “ and their Ears heavy, and shut their  
 “ Eyes, lest they should see, — and  
 “ be converted; this was only a Pro-  
 “ phesy of what would happen.” The  
 Reason of all which is, that the *Hebrew*,  
 being a very barren and indigent Lan-  
 guage, requires often, in order to be  
 rightly understood, that the Mind help  
 out and assist the Letter. But as there  
 is no Difference nor Variety of Thought  
 or Conception, either so nice, or so  
 subtle and fine, for which the *Greek*  
 Language mayn’t easily find a clear and  
 proper Expression in the vast and inex-  
 haustible Source of its Terms and Phra-  
 ses; Interpretations like those which  
 Mr. and Madam D. propose to us on  
 such

upon HOMER's Iliad. 23

such Occasions, are Things unheard of among the *Greek* Criticks and Gramarians. The Command therefore which *Jupiter* here gives this Dream, can only be understood of a real and express Order and Command in a *Greek* Poet; and especially in a Poet, who understood so well the Genius and Extent of his own Language, as *Homer* did.

But 2dly, There is no Comparison between the two Passages, even understanding them both literally; for whereas *Jupiter* dictates *verbatim* to his Dream, the Message he was to deliver to *Agamemnon*, God only gives, in the other, the wicked Spirit a general Permission to deceive *Ahab*. In the *Iliad*, *Jupiter*, purely as it would seem for the Sake of the Pleasure of Repetition, not only invents, but in so many Words speaks himself the Lye, which the seducing Dream is exactly to repeat to *Agamemnon* (p. 43.) But in the Holy Scripture, 'tis the wicked Spirit who offers himself to become a lying Spirit in the Mouth of all *Ahab's* Prophets. Hereby not only the eternal Truth is clear'd from either forming or pronouncing a Lye; but the Character of the wicked Spirit is more original and better mark'd and distinguish'd than in *Homer*, where

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all his Part is only faithfully to repeat the Words of *Jupiter*, as any other Messenger must also have done. And certainly in the 4th *B.* where *Minerva* obtains of *Jupiter* a Permission, to get the Alliance and Confederacy dissolv'd and broken by *Pandarus*, that was but just before confirm'd and ratified between the *Greeks* and *Trojans*; this Goddess, who in *Madam D's* Account is Wisdom itself, acquits herself of this fatal Commission with infinitely more Passion and Malice than even here the seducing Dream does his; of which we shall treat more fully in its proper Place hereafter.

3dly, The Conduct of *Jupiter* with reference to *Agamemnon*, is quite different from that of God's to *Ahab*. In reading the whole Chapter in the Holy Scripture, we see that the Prophet *Micaiah* first informs and admonishes the King of the Design the Devil had form'd against him; 'tis the Prophet who tells *Ahab* what pass'd in the Council of the Almighty; who acquaints him that the wicked Spirit animated his false Prophets with the Assurance they gave him of Victory; who, lastly, argues and reasons a long Time with him in order to save and preserve him from the Death and Destruction that would otherwise suddenly



upon HOMER's *Iliad*. 25

suddenly overtake him in *Syria*. Therefore to render the Passage in the *Iliad* parallel to this in the Book of *Kings*; when *Agamemnon* was inclin'd by some evil Counsel to attack the *Trojans*, *Jupiter* hereupon should have inspir'd *Calcas* to admonish the King, that the lying Dream only intended to seduce him; that 'twas this evil Spirit that spoke by the Mouth of his Counsellors; and, lastly, that his Designs would only terminate in the total Defeat and Overthrow of his Army, and his own Personal Destruction. But it being now quite the Reverse, and *Jupiter* leading *Agamemnon* into an inevitable Snare, by the Order he gives him to fight, which no Admonition nor the least Intimation had ever discover'd to him; I affirm, that God himself is not more different from *Belial*, than the Passage of the Scripture is from that of the *Iliad*.

But in general, why is it that we always understand the Passages of the Holy Scripture, wheresoever God speaks or acts, in a favourable Sense? 'Tis because the Scripture itself sufficiently informs us, and perfectly instructs us in the Doctrine of the Justness and Goodness of God. Is the Case the same as to *Jupiter*? This pretended Deity here deceives

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deceives *Agamemnon*; and how often heretofore had he deceiv'd *Juno* in the Article of his Lewdness and Debaucheries? Does not this Goddess herself tell him in plain Terms, *Deceiver that thou art*?\* And don't Madam D. justify this Reproach in her Remark, (p. 323.) when she says, "*Juno* knew, that *Jupiter* had frequently preferr'd Mortals to her"? *Jupiter* here sacrifices *Agamemnon*, and with him all the *Greeks*, to *Achilles*' Revenge: And in B. 4. (p. 131.) don't he make an infamous Exchange of the Town of *Troy*, which he delivers up to *Juno* for other Towns that are to be put under the Protection of this Goddess? Madam D. says, upon Occasion of this Passage, (p. 408.) that we must always remember, that in the Persons and Characters of these Gods, *Homer* represents the Intrigues of Princes, whose publick Actions often owe their Original only to Domestic Quarrels, and private Interests. Why don't she say the same Thing here? In a Word, Madam D. having own'd that *Jupiter*, in two or three Places of the *Iliad*, represents a brutal, unjust, immoral and licentious

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\* B. 1. p. 35.

upon HOMER's Iliad. 27

Prince, has herself condemn'd those frequent Applications and Parallels she makes of the same *Jupiter*, with the true God, in her *Remarks*; where we find perpetually, *Homer teaches us here that God conceals, that God reveals, that God forbids, that God permits, &c.* *Homer* was ignorant of the true God, and his *Jupiter* is so far from being proper to represent him, that he only perfectly confirms the Passage of the Holy Scripture, where 'tis said, the Gods of the Gentiles are Devils, *Dii Gentium Dæmonia*, (*Psalms* 95.) for both in his Discourse and Actions throughout the *Iliad*, *Jupiter* almost every where only resembles the Devil; but especially with reference to *Achilles* and *Agamemnon's* Quarrel, he seems only emphatically to teach his Readers throughout the Poem that he is so: "If you are of any Figure or Importance in a State or Army, and if your King, Prince or General shou'd, in the smallest Matter or Circumstance offend you, break off from him, and beware of being reconcil'd, whatever Step he may make in order to it, if your Interest or Passions don't otherwise engage you hereto; I'll herein maintain and support you to the last, and crown you with Glory, both during your Retreat, and after your Return." I don't  
at



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at all wonder, after this, that *Plato* judg'd *Homer's* Poetry contrary to Religion and true Morality, to the Safety and Preservation of States, and the Felicity and Happiness of the Nation; and that he thought it ought to be banish'd from a well-order'd and govern'd Commonwealth.

Madam *D.* might take it amiss if I omitted another Interpretation she gives of this Passage; (1. 330.) "It may be said, says she, that *Agamemnon* is not seduc'd here, but by his own Fault, for understanding amiss the Words of the Dream; which commanded him to arm all the *Greeks*, and put the Troops in the Order of Battle: And this is what he did not do; for he don't reconcile himself with *Achilles*, nor strengthen and fortify himself with the Troops and Power of his Prince to make the Attack; he wou'd succeed, tho' he preserv'd his Resentment and Spirit of Revenge; but this is not the Method to succeed. Thus this Passage, far from implying any Blasphemy, on the contrary, contains a very pious and useful Instruction." But without farther examining this Passage, which at first Sight appears blasphemous, and which yet, according to  
Madam

upon HOMER's Iliad. 29

Madam D. contains very pious Instruction; or considering this pious Instruction which *Jupiter* sends by a lying Dream, which wholly destroys the Propriety and Decorum of the Characters; I'll only say here, that by this last Interpretation, tho' the true Sense of the Word *μαρτυρία* is hereby wholly hid and lost, yet neither does this prevent *Jupiter's* being a Lier, or at least a Deceiver. But I can't omit calling to Mind another Remark of Madam D. upon that Passage of *Homer*, where he says (p. 5.) "That Dreams also proceed from *Jupiter*." Upon which she thus comments, (p. 286.) "*Homer* here acknowledges this Truth, That there are Dreams that come from God: A Truth confirm'd by so many Examples in the holy Scripture and prophane History, that I can't enough wonder at *Aristotle's* rejecting it. The Author of *Ecclesiasticus* says very well, speaking of Dreams, That we must not believe them unless they are sent from God. *Nisi ab Altissimo fuerit missa Visitatio, ne dederis in illis Cor tuum*, ch. 34. 6. It will be said how shall we know and distinguish such Dreams from common and ordinary ones? He who sends them, teaches us to make this Distinction

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" ction by a peculiar Sensation he im-  
 " prints upon the Mind, at the same  
 " time he communicates and reveals  
 " their Meaning. *Est Deus in celo re-*  
 " *velans Mysteria, Dan. 2. 28.*" Thus  
 Homer's most trifling Notions and  
 Ideas, and which have been hitherto  
 only esteem'd as so many Parts or  
 Branches of the *Licentia Poetica*, are  
 now made Points and Articles of the  
 most sacred Theology in Madam D's  
*Remarks*. And because God formerly  
 sent mysterious Dreams to the Patriarchs  
 and Prophets under the Old Testa-  
 ment Dispensation, and to several ho-  
 ly Persons under the Gospel; and  
 even, for special Reasons, to some  
 of the *Pagan* Princes; will Madam D.  
 make a general Rule hereof? Has she  
 the Experience of such Sort of Dreams,  
 and the true Marks and Criterions of  
 their Distinction? I don't know: But  
 she ought to know, that the Church is  
 very nice in the Points of particular Re-  
 velations and private Inspirations; and  
 that this wise and holy Mother, giving  
 her Children her own Decisions, and not  
 their inward Sensations for the Rules of  
 their Faith, she preserves them hereby  
 not only from Error, but also from all  
 Superstition and Weakness. And indeed  
 this



upon HOMER's Iliad. 31

this inward Sensation imprinted upon the Mind, is so very deceitful a Sign, that *Agamemnon* here, upon the Account of such an Impression, suffers himself to be seduc'd by a Promise; which, according to Madam D's first Interpretation, proceeded not from God or *Jupiter*, but from a lying Dream, or the Devil. But after all, I shan't censure a Lady for putting Faith in Dreams: I shall only refer all this to the same Principles that made her, in the Book last publish'd \* p. 16. rank Divination in the Number of Liberal Arts, and place it also immediately after Geometry; that Science of Divination, which made *Cato* say, in a much more ignorant Age than ours, That he could not imagine how two *Augurs* should ever meet and look one another in the Face without smiling. *Cic. de Div. B. 2.*

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\* The Causes of the Corr. of Taste.

SECT.

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### SECT. II.

*The Notion of the Justice and Goodness of God and Divine Providence, entirely overthrown by Homer in the Character and Conduct he gives Jupiter, and all his other Deities throughout the Iliad.*

**T**HE strongest Arguments we can use with Men to perswade them to Vertue, and give them a Horror of Vice, are taken from the Idea of a God full of Mercy and Goodness towards his Creatures, while they preserve and continue in that State and Condition in which he created and placed them; and who afterwards, according to the Use they make of their natural Liberty, becomes either a faithful Rewarder, or a severe Judge to them. Vertue generally finds its Reward, and Vice its Punishment, in this Life; but if to prevent the doing any Violence to the natural Course of second Causes, the Creator permits that Things sometimes happen otherwise, his Justice will set all right again after Death in a future State. This is the common Notion of distributive Justice, when assign'd to God. Tho' the Pagans had not

upon HOMER's Iliad. 33

not so exact a Knowledge thereof as we; yet in general they see the Truth, the Certainty, and Necessity of this System. Madam D. herself (*Pref. p. 48.*) says, that *Homer* knew the Immortality of the Soul, as well as the Rewards and Punishments of another Life; and that he believ'd Men drew all their Misfortunes and Miseries upon themselves, by the bad Use they made of their Liberty. I suppose therefore here, *Homer* such only as M. D. represents him. I shou'd, indeed, be more perplex'd, if I had to do with a free-thinking or unbelieving Critick and Commentator, who deny'd the Principles before laid down, or who pretended that *Homer* never had any Regard to them; but Madam D. is so full of those Truths, that she finds them even in a Poet, who represents *Jupiter* every where malicious and unjust, as I hope fully to prove in this *Section*.

*Homer*, judging War and Destruction to be the greatest and most sublime Object Poetry cou'd present to Men, thought also that nothing was more worthy his *Jupiter*, than to engage Nations one against another; and this often for the sole Pleasure of seeing Men massacre and murder one another. The Poet, who generally expresses Good and Evil much after the same Manner, speaks out on this

D                      Head,



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Head, as plain as upon any other. "*Ajax*,  
 " says he, in *B.7.* (*p.15.*) all cover'd with  
 " his shining Armour, advances like the  
 " terrible God *Mars*; when a new Fire  
 " animating his Courage, he comes  
 " out of his Palace in the most terrible  
 " Manner, to exercise his Rage and Vi-  
 " olence in Battle, and decide the For-  
 " tune of two Nations whom *Jupiter*  
 " had engaged one against another,  
 " after having kindled, and blown up  
 " in their Souls, all the Seeds of Dis-  
 " cord." Here we find, in the Compass  
 of five or six Lines, *Ajax*, *Mars*, *Jupi-*  
*ter*, *Discord*, to express *Ajax* only. These  
 are the Beauties with which *Homer* se-  
 duces his Admirers, and renders either  
 amiable or plausible the most shocking  
 and hideous Part of his Poem. For  
 can any thing indeed be blacker, or  
 more hideous, than *Jupiter* himself kind-  
 ling Discord in \* Mens Souls? In *B.11.*  
 " *Discord*, the Mother of Sighs and Tears,  
 " rejoices to see this bloody Sport, for  
 " she was the sole Deity that was en-  
 " gag'd in this terrible Rencounter;  
 " the others were retir'd, all equally  
 " complaining of the powerful Son of  
 " *Saturn*, for his having resolved to give

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\* *Pag. 167.*

" Victory

upon HOMER's Iliad. 35

“ Victory to the *Trojans*. But this God  
“ sitting solitary upon his Throne, was  
“ not at all touched, or the least affe-  
“ cted with their Murmurs and Com-  
“ plaints, but fed and delighted his  
“ Eyes with the sparkling Lustre of the  
“ Arms, and the terrible Sight of so  
“ many thousand Men, who mutually  
“ kill'd and destroy'd one another. In  
“ B. 16. (p. 41.) *Jupiter* did not divert  
“ his Eyes one Moment from beholding  
“ the whole Action; he look'd at it  
“ without Interruption, revolving in his  
“ Mind different Thoughts about the  
“ Death of *Patroclus*, and deliberating  
“ whether in that Moment he should  
“ grant *Hector* the Glory of sacrificing,  
“ even upon the very Body of *Sarpedon*:  
“ or if he shou'd delay it some time  
“ longer, to render this Day still more  
“ fatal to a greater Number of Heroes.  
“ But Lastly, it seem'd to him better so  
“ to order it, that *Patroclus* shou'd again  
“ repulse the *Trojans*, and *Hector* him-  
“ self, back to the very Walls, and co-  
“ ver the Earth with dead Bodies.”  
This Example is especially remarkable  
above all the rest: *Jupiter* has an Af-  
fection for the *Trojans*; he testifies it on  
several Occasions, and especially in the  
4th B. (p. 130, 131, 132.) he swore to

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*Thetis* he would give the *Trojans* great Success and Advantages, to revenge *Achilles*. *Patroclus*, one of the *Greek* Heroes, kills *Sarpedon*, *Jupiter's* own Son; and yet hereupon this God thinks it better that *Patroclus* should again repulse the *Trojans*, and cover the Earth with their dead Bodies; and indeed the whole *Iliad*, from the beginning of the Battle to *Achilles'* Return, is fill'd with nothing but the fantastical Inconstancy and Variation of *Jupiter*, sometimes favouring the *Greeks*, sometimes the *Trojans*; and only terminates in the Ruin and Destruction of both. Has not *Madam D.* great and abundant Reason after this to say, upon Occasion of *Homer's Jupiter*, (l. 485.) "That God is only  
" Mercy, Peace, and Goodness." And does not *Jupiter* himself speak with great Decorum in the *Iliad*, when he thus addresses himself to *Mars*: "Of  
" all the Gods that inhabit *Olympus* you  
" are the most odious, since you take  
" Pleasure in nothing but Discord and  
" War," (B. 5. p. 234.)

And indeed, *Homer* sufficiently prepares us for all the Cruelty and Barbarity of *Jupiter* in the very Beginning of his Poem; when after having said (p. 1.)  
" That *Achilles'* Anger had precipitated  
" the



upon HOMER's Iliad. 37

“ the generous Souls of so many Heroes into the dark Regions of *Fluto*,  
“ and deliver'd their Bodies a Prey to  
“ the Dogs and Vulture; he adds, that  
“ so the Decrees of great *Jupiter* might  
“ be accomplish'd.”

*Plutarch* would a little soften this Passage that seem'd so harsh to him, \* and has thereby incurr'd the Censure of *Madam D.* who, in her *Remarks*, (I. 279.) says, “ This blind Philosopher was ignorant of this Truth, that God punishes Men; and that from the greatest Evil which he inflicts upon them, he knows how to draw the greatest Good.” To find *Plutarch* here treated as an ignorant and a blind Philosopher, when compar'd with *Homer*, one would be apt to think he were a sacred Author, or at least some Father of the Church: And indeed, upon the Subject of the Divine Decrees and Punishments, *Madam D.* pays very near the same Regard and Submission to him, as a Divine would do to *St. Paul* or *St. Thomas*. We shall quickly undeceive her in this Particular: But considering now *Homer* and *Plutarch* only as *Pagan* Authors, as they

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\* In his *Treatise of the true Method of Reading the Poets*.

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both are; I affirm, That whereas the *Iliad* throughout authorizes Pride, Insolence, and Cruelty; the Lives of the Illustrious Men, wrote by *Plutarch*, only tend to inspire Sovereigns with the Love of Vertue, Justice, and publick Good: The reading of *Homer* corrupted *Alexander*, and has deceiv'd and imposed upon an infinite Number of others by the Character of his Heroe, and of which Madam D. herself is a recent and flagrant Instance; we may say, on the contrary, of *Plutarch*, that no Prince who reads him with a true Taste, can ever prove a bad one, and that no Author is so proper to inspire Kings and Princes with a right and just Passion for true Fame and Glory. And even with respect to the present Subject, what Author more abounds with the Examples of divine Punishments than *Plutarch*? The Criticks in History perhaps would complain but of too many. Therefore, when he says, we should not ascribe the Miseries of Men to the Will and Pleasure of the Gods, he means that the Gods are not delighted and diverted, as *Homer's Jupiter* is, with plunging Men into all Sort of Miseries, without any Regard to the Justice of their Cause. Madam D. is therefore here much blinder than

*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 39

than *Plutarch*, when in her *Preface* she says, in General, and without any Restriction or Limitation, "That 'tis to be ignorant of the Nature of God, to deny that 'tis He who sends good and evil Things to Men." It is no Part of the Nature of God to inflict Evils upon Men; but Men becoming guilty, have only drawn down Punishments upon themselves, instead of those Mercies and Blessings which God of his infinite Goodness must otherwise have communicated to them, and had prepared for them. Therefore I would not censure an Author for the simple Relation he would make of the Evils and Miseries that surround Men on all Sides; but I would only require of him, that he should give a true and just Turn to them; that he should give us to understand that the Miseries of Life serve to punish the Wicked, to try the Righteous and Good, to improve and purify the Latter from smaller Faults they too frequently commit: I would also allow him to make use of the Chain and Connection of second Causes, provided he made a sober and wise Use hereof, and still insisted upon the Rectification of the Disorders, and the perfect Restoration of Order in a future State. But after all,



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the Perplexity which humane Reason may be involv'd in, upon the Account of the apparent Confusion and Disorder that now reigns and takes place in the World, don't concern the Poets; since, according to the Principles of *Aristotle*, 'tis plain by *F. Bossu*, (*B. 1. Ch. 2.*) " That 'tis only the Poet him-  
" self who frames and produces here  
" the dire and fatal Consequences that  
" bad Actions and ill concerted Designs  
" are commonly attended with, as also  
" the Reward of good Actions, and the  
" Pleasure and Satisfaction we generally  
" reap from just and well-formed De-  
" signs, when managed and pursued  
" with Prudence and good Sense." They are the Historians therefore only who can be perplex'd upon this Subject, by meeting so often with the Success and Prosperity of bad, and the Miseries and Misfortunes of good and vertuous Men, in almost every Age and Period of Time. But a Poet, who is the Master of his Subject, should never, according to *Aristotle*, present such Objects; and it must proceed from great Ignorance or Perverseness of Mind indeed, if in his Compositions he represents the Gods either as unjust or malicious. Let not any Passages in the Holy Scripture there-  
fore,

upon HOMER'S Iliad. 41

fore, where God is said to send and to inflict Evils upon Men, be ever alledged to justify *Homer*: For, besides that the Holy Scripture is not a Poem, God has Reason to afflict Persons and Nations that can't belong to *Jupiter*; for not to mention Original Sin, which has subjected the whole humane Race to all the Miseries of this Life, and even to Death itself; and not to mention, that eternal Death (which is never inflicted but upon the Guilty, and such as deserve it) is the only Thing that deserves the true Name of Evil and real Death; besides God, being Holiness itself, is frequently provok'd by those Men who appear to us the most deserving and innocent, and thereby draw down upon themselves Punishments, the Cause whereof is not always visible. When God, for Example, for the Punishment of the Sins of a Prince, inflicts Judgments upon his Subjects, Religion teaches us, that those Subjects may be themselves guilty of a great many secret Iniquities, the general Punishment of which is apply'd to the particular Punishment of their King and Prince. But among the *Pagans*, People were not thought worthy of the Anger of the Gods, but only for the worst and most scandalous Crimes; and besides,  
the

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the saddest and most deplorable State and Condition of the present Life, being in *Homer's* Account, as it is explain'd in the 11th B. of the *Odyssey*, preferable to the greatest and happiest in the Infernal Regions, the Poet makes the Gods guilty of a real Injustice, when he makes his Kings to be punish'd by Judgments that terminate in the Death and Destruction of their Subjects. We know that the Fortune of Subjects being link'd with that of their Prince, he can't be vicious without their suffering: And *Minerva* in *Telemachus* therefore makes an admirable Use of this Principle, to inspire her Pupil with true Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness. But we must always distinguish those Evils that are inseparably connected with all humane States and Governments, and necessarily flow from the present Condition of humane Affairs, from those that proceed from an immediate Judgment and Punishment from Heaven: A Divine knows, that both the One and the Other have a Cause equally just, tho' perhaps not here equally evident and conspicuous. The Historian relates both, as his Memoirs furnish him, without being oblig'd to give an exact Interpretation, or any particular Application of them:

But



upon HOMER's Iliad. 43

But a Poet should treat those two sort of Evils very differently; he may easily introduce in a Episode, or insert in the Course of his Narration, that the Effects of the Imprudence or Wickedness of Princes, generally speaking, ruin and destroy their Subjects more than themselves; but 'tis very wrong in him to take for the principal Subject of his Poem any such Fact or Event; because, according to *Aristotle's* Rule, which generally speaking is true and just, a Poet in Tragedy, and much less in a Epic Poem, should rather save the Guilty, to destroy the Innocent; but when he is to speak of any immediate Judgment and Punishment of Heaven, it can never then be allow'd to punish the Subjects for the Crimes of their Princes, unless the Poet finds some Expedient to render the People Sharers in the Guilt that God punisheth; else he will only shock his Readers, both by the Absurdity and Impiety of his Supposition. Therefore, when *Horace*, seduc'd by vulgar Prejudice and Opinion, would find some Moral in the *Iliad*; and that the Effect of this Enquiry is, that Subjects are punish'd for the Follies and Vices of their Princes;

*Quicquid delirant Reges, plectuntur Achivi,*  
he

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he hath, without intending it, only made a Satyr upon *Homer*; for *Homer* is so far from justifying this Punishment of the People, by making them in some sort Sharers in the Guilt and Crimes of their Kings, by a Turn it had been easy for any one to have given Things, who had a Genius for Fiction and Invention; that he has on the contrary done all that possibly could be done to destroy this Idea in the Mind of his Readers. The whole *Iliad* is founded upon three Facts, where the People are punish'd for the Faults of their Princes——The first, is the carrying off of *Helen* by *Paris*, added to the Refusal of this Princess that *Priam* gave the *Atrides* who came to demand her, which caus'd the Ruin of the *Trojans*. The second, is *Agamemnon's* insulting the Priest of *Apollo*, who came to offer a Ransom for his Daughter; which brings a Plague into the *Grecian* Army. The third, is the Affront the same *Agamemnon* gives *Achilles*, by taking from him his Captive; which excites the Anger that prov'd so fatal to so many Heroes. With respect to the *Trojans*, we need only read the terrible Imprecation they all make in the 3d B. (p. 117.) against *Paris*, the Author of their Miseries, having only for his Accomplices

upon HOMER's Iliad. 45

complices some Friends worthy to follow him; (*B. 3. p. 100.*) So that *Homer*, who had in the History of the Destruction of the *Trojans* a very memorable and remarkable Example of a just Punishment, has yet found Means to cause them to perish unjustly. As for the second Fact, *viz. Apollo's* Revenge upon the *Grecian* Army, we read in the first Book, "That as soon as the Priest of  
" this God appear'd, all the *Greeks* signified by a favourable Silence, that  
" his Dignity and Character was to be  
" reverenc'd, and his noble Presents accepted." This renders the Moral, which *Madam D.* here gives *Homer*, vain and chimerical, when she says upon Occasion of this Passage, (284.) "That  
" *Homer* first making the Mules and  
" Dogs to be struck and affected with  
" the Plague, would thereby insinuate  
" that God who is a Lover of Men,  
" and who never punishes them but  
" with Reluctance, would give the  
" *Greeks* Time for Repentance." And for what? For *Agamemnon's* Fault they had before disapprov'd and condemn'd? As for the third Fact, which is indeed the true Subject of the *Iliad*, *viz. The Affront Agamemnon* gives *Achilles*, and for which *Jupiter* punishes the *Greeks* at  
the



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the Prayer and Desire of *Thetis*; *Achilles* declares himself in the 1st B. (p. 22.) that he has only Reason to complain of *Agamemnon*, who robb'd him of *Briseis*, and was guilty of this Piece of Injustice against the exprefs Advice of *Nestor*. But we have still a more singular Testimony of the *Greeks* Innocence in this particular, in B. 13. (p. 260.) where *Neptune* says, speaking of them, "That  
 " full of Resentment against *Agamem-*  
 " *non*, because of the Injury and Inju-  
 " stice he had done *Achilles*, they dis-  
 " obey his Orders, and suffer them-  
 " selves to be killed like so many Co-  
 " wards." This was indeed a pleasant  
 Way of revenging themselves; and *Neptune* says false, when he accuses the *Greeks* of suffering themselves to be killed, to be revenged of *Agamemnon*; for 'tis said, after the Review of the Troops made in the 2d B. and consequently long after the Injury done *Achilles* in the first, that they chose rather to fight against the *Trojans*, than to return: But this Testimony of *Neptune's*, tho' simple, false and foolish, is yet sufficient to shew that the *Greeks* were as innocent of the Injury done *Achilles*, as that done the Priest of *Apollo*. If, therefore, *Achilles* afterwards involves them in his Complaint,

upon HOMER's Iliad. 47

plaint, and pretends they were as ungrateful as their General, as Madam D. observes, (B. 2. p. 452.) it is a pure Calumny, that deserves no Answer nor Confutation. Madam D. ought not therefore to boast that *Homer* (I. 305.) knew this great Truth, that God commonly punishes Kings and Princes, in punishing their Subjects; it had been much better for him he had been ignorant of it, than only to know it in the Manner he did, since he corrupted the true Use of it. 'Tis to such ignorant and impious Teachers, that God makes this Reproach, *What have you to do to speak of my Judgments? Peccatori autem dixit Deus: Quare tu enarras Justitias meas* (Ps. 49.) And indeed, as Mr. D. in a Remark upon *Plato's Eutiphron*, (p. 453.) has very well observ'd, "That it belongs to God  
" alone to command and injoin Actions,  
" which at first Sight may seem or appear of a heinous or atrocious Nature:" So I say, that it can only be allowed to him to deliver or dictate certain Propositions or Assertions, that may at first seem harsh to humane Understanding, because he alone can have just Reasons to express himself thus; and besides, he has always the Church for an Interpreter. We say the same of  
ano-

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another Reflection of Madam D. upon a Passage of the 3d B. (p. 116.) where the two Armies make an Imprecation upon the Children and Posterity of those who should violate the Treaty there mentioned. "*Homer*, says she, (399.) "then knew that the Crimes of the Fathers might be punished upon the Children." *Homer* knew nothing of the Matter: If he had, he would have known that God never punishes the Crimes of the Fathers upon the Children, with a particular Punishment, but when the Children are guilty with their Fathers, either by Original Sin, or by the voluntary Imitation of their Fathers Crimes, as all the Successors of *Jeroboam* were. Under a just God, none can be miserable, who don't deserve it: *Neque enim sub Deo justo miser esse quisquam, nisi mereatur, potest.*\* And indeed 'tis extream odd, that to justify *Homer's* falsest and most absurd Notions, they should make a Sport as 'twere of scattering up and down in a prophane Author the Passages of Holy Scripture, that have most exercis'd and perplex'd the greatest Doctors of the Church in all Ages, o-

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† *Aug. Op. B. 1. p. 39.*



## upon HOMER's Iliad. 49

mitting the clearer Passages that serve for a Comment and Interpretation to them, and to which they ought still to be referred. 'Tis true, for Example, that in the 20th Ch. of *Ex.* (v. 5.) 'tis said, *I am a powerful and jealous God, visiting the Iniquities of the Fathers upon the Children.* But this Passage and some others like this, are explain'd at length throughout the whole 18th Ch. of the Prophet *Ezekiel*, where 'tis expressly affirm'd, (v. 20.) *That the Son shall not bear the Iniquity of his Father, nor the Father the Iniquity of the Son.* And to speak here freely my Opinion, they are those Passages of Scripture which the Laity, but especially the Ladies, ought to have chiefly in their Memories, to edify themselves with. But the obscure and more difficult ones ought to be left to Divines: First, Because they never mention them but to the Purpose, and upon a proper Time and Occasion: Secondly, Because they never produce them without accompanying them with proper Explications, fixing their true and genuine Meaning, which is always one of Mercy or Righteousness.

After all, *Jupiter* himself in the *Iliad* in a Manner owns and acknowledges his own Injustice. He never thinks of de-

E fending

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fending himself by Reason against the Complaints the other Gods make of the unjust Favours he shews *Achilles* at the Expende of the *Greeks*. "If what you suspect is true, says he to *Juno*, who knew the Promises he had just made to *Thetis*, 'tis because it's my Will and Pleasure, and so it must be."

(B. I. p. 37.) A just Prince desires always that his Commands and Orders should be founded upon Reason and Justice; he is not contented with being himself conscious of the Equity of what he commands; he desires also that his Officers and Subjects should be sensible hereof, because he knows that hereby their Obedience will become more willing and chearful. Besides, with respect to Eloquence and Poetry, what is it the Nature and Essence of a good or excellent Discourse consists in, if it is not in the right and clear unfolding of different Interests, in the just and consequential Reasoning and Arguing of the several Pretences that happen to be started, in the placing in a clear and true Light the solid or at least plausible Pleas of the several Parties? What Pleasure can you imagine then Persons of Sense find in hearing *Jupiter* always repeat, I will have it so; I am the strongest;

upon HOMER's Iliad. 51

strongest; Whoever disobeys me shall repent it: Yet this is the whole Subject Matter of a Discourse in the 8th B. (p. 34.) address'd even to a general Assembly of the Gods themselves; and of another Discourse in the same B. (p. 60.) which *Jupiter* sends by an Envoy to *Juno* and *Minerva*, and which is exactly repeated by *Iris*, (p. 61.) and of two other Discourses he himself makes to these two Goddesses in their Presence, (p. 61.) and which both conclude with the Term *Insolence* he gives them. "This Thunder should have reveng'd me of your Insolence, says he in the one; your Insolence shall be confounded," says he in the other. Of the same Taste is the Discourse which *Iris* brings and repeats again to *Neptune* from *Jupiter*, (B. 15. p. 355.) Need we any longer wonder, that there is neither Wit nor Sense in such sort of Discourses, tho' Madam D. says upon their Occasion, (2. 412.) that *Homer* makes *Jupiter* speak with a Majesty worthy of the Supream Deity and Sovereign Ruler and Governor of Gods and Men.

A necessary Evil that flows hence is, that such Discourses oblige the Gods to very poor and pitiful Answers. After *Iris*' Message to *Juno* and *Minerva*, the



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first says to the other fighting, (B. 8. p. 62.) "Immortal Daughter of *Jupiter*, who is always arm'd with the "terrible *Ægis*, my Judgment is, "that we should espouse the Quarrel "of mortal Men, and fight against "this powerful Deity. Let some perish, and others escape as well as they "can, and the great Master of Thunder dispose as he pleases of the Destiny of the *Greeks* and *Trojans*." *Neptune* (B. 15. p. 256.) opposes at first the Order sent by *Jupiter*; and to prove his Equality, he informs *Iris*, who yet knew it as well as himself, that *Saturn* and *Rhea* had three Sons, of which he was the second; he names them, and gives the Detail of the Division of the Universe, of which the sole Law of Chance had assign'd him the second Share. Notwithstanding this, *Iris* advises him to yield, "Representing to "him it was often a Mark of true "Greatness and Courage to change;" which is very true as to Men, or Gods consider'd as Men. *Neptune* thanks him for his Advice; but immediately after is guilty of all the Folly of a weak proud Man, of which Character we have discoursed elsewhere,\* and which

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\* Part 3. §. 1. Ch. 2. Art. 3.

upon HOMER's Iliad. 53

Madam D. boasts *Homer* had so well painted and drawn. And indeed the Gods may be impertinent, but *Homer* can never be in the wrong. But what shews how very fantastical and unequal this Poet is in his Characters, or the Sentiments he gives his Persons, *Neptune* himself had reprov'd *Juno* for a Revolt like this, to which he is here tempted and immediately drawn in. “ *Juno* “ in (B. 8. p. 47.) angry at *Hector's* “ Haughtiness, and hastily tossing and “ turning herself upon her Throne, “ makes all vast *Olympus* tremble: She “ addresses herself to *Neptune*, and says “ to him, And you powerful *Neptune*, “ are not you concern'd to see the “ *Greeks* so miserably perish? Why don't “ you declare for them, and grant them “ Victory? For if all the Gods who “ are here assembled, and that are in “ the *Greek* Interest, thought it their “ Duty to repulse the *Trojans* and oppose themselves to *Jupiter*, we should “ soon see this God sit solitary by himself upon the Top of Mount *Ida*, deploring his Weakness.” What Confusion, What Contradiction of Ideas is there in the *Iliad* as to *Jupiter's* Authority and Power? 'Tis true that Madam D. (p. 421.) says, “ That this

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“ Discourse of *Juno* is the ordinary  
 “ Language of all Fomenters of Revolts  
 “ and Conspiracies; their Party is al-  
 “ ways very strong; People wait for  
 “ nothing else, but only till some set up  
 “ the Standard and Declaration; and  
 “ in a Moment the Prince will be aban-  
 “ don’d.” Thus this Goddess, who,  
 as Madam D. observes, don’t swear  
 falsely, (*v. 2. 596.*) for fear of autho-  
 rizing Perjury by her Example, yet is  
 not afraid of giving an Example, and  
 even setting herself up as Head of a Re-  
 volt or Conspiracy. Indeed it had been  
 better she had not, by shaking her  
 Throne, shook the vast *Olympus*, but that  
 she had express’d herself in a more so-  
 ber and rational Manner; she had there-  
 by escap’d *Neptune’s* sharp Reproof and  
 Censure, (*B 8. p. 47.*) “ Rash *Juno*,  
 “ what Counsel is this you dare thus  
 “ propose to me? It shall never be said  
 “ that I shall conspire, though it were  
 “ with all the other Deities united to-  
 “ gether, against *Jupiter*; for he alone  
 “ is stronger than all the other Gods put  
 “ together.” Whereupon Madam D. ob-  
 serves, “ that this Discourse of *Neptune* is  
 “ what a wise Man ought to make upon  
 “ any Proposal being made him to enter  
 “ into a Conspiracy against his Prince.”



## upon HOMER's *Iliad*. 55

A very effectual Instruction coming from a Deity, who receiving himself a Command from *Jupiter* in the 15th *B.* begins with the Discourse of a Rebel, and ends with one of a Fool! However it is, the whole *Iliad* is almost nothing else but one continued Scandal of *Jupiter* for his Injustice, and the Reproach and Infamy of all the other Deities for their Weakness; for a due Subordination, Deference, and rational Obedience, don't in the least dishonour them; but a servile Subjection, Weakness, and forc'd Obedience, always reflects some Reproach, which a Poet should avoid in the Characters of Persons of any Dignity and Honour.

This must be own'd, that in the *Iliad*, *Jupiter* has indeed some Fits and Returns of Compassion; of which here follow two memorable Examples. In the beginning of the 4th *B.* (p. 128, 129.)

“ The Son of *Saturn*, says the Poet, designing to provoke *Juno*, rallies her  
 “ bitterly, and makes an odious Comparison and full of Contempt; there  
 “ are two Goddesses who are favourable to *Menelaus*, *Juno* and *Minerva*  
 “ —but these two Goddesses divert themselves with seeing the Fights and  
 “ Battles at a Distance——whereas *Ve-*

## 56 *A Critical Dissertation*

“ *nus* never leaves *Paris* one Moment,  
“ but still accompanies him in all his  
“ Dangers. Let us then consult together, *says Jupiter afterwards*, what  
“ End we shall put to so important an  
“ Affair; shall we kindle a fresh War,  
“ and give new Scenes of bloody Battles, or inspire the *Greeks* and *Trojans*  
“ with a Spirit of Peace and Friendship?  
“ If this last were agreeable to all the  
“ Gods, the City of King *Priam* would  
“ continue inhabited, and *Menelaus*  
“ might bring back *Helen* into his Territories.” Here’s indeed a Proposal  
of Peace, which seems to shew some Goodness and Justice in *Jupiter*. But  
in the first Place this God here forgets  
the Oath he made to *Thetis*, of rendering  
the *Trojans* victorious, for *Achilles*’  
Honour and Glory, and to satisfy his  
Revenge; for if the Peace is made, this  
Promise, which ought to be as *Madam D.*  
thinks immutable, will have no Effect;  
these Marks of Gratitude and Acknowledgment,  
which the Supreme God ow’d his Benefactress,  
can take no Place: Thus the Reconciliation  
which *Jupiter* here proposes, is already  
spoiled by the unjust Promise and rash Oath  
which is inconsistent with it. This is  
what often happens to *Homer*; he so  
perplexes

upon HOMER's Iliad. 57

perplexes himself, by not minding or following any Rule, that in his Hands Evil is always Evil, and even Good it self very often changes its Nature.

2dly, In what Manner is it *Jupiter* manages this Matter, to make the Treaty of Peace accepted? By provoking and exasperating, (p. 128.) and bitter railing, and making odious Comparisons of the two Goddesses to whom he proposes it. *Homer*, who is pretended to be so instructive in all Kinds, at least does not seem to give here a good Model for a Negotiation and Treaty. What Occasion then is there for this Proposal of Peace? For the same Reason only as most other Things we find in *Homer*, viz. To make a Discourse, to say what then came in his Head, to prolong his Poem. Accordingly *Juno* very heartily rejects it: "I have wearied and  
" fatigu'd my Horses, says she, (p. 130.)  
" to go every where to assemble Nations  
" against *Priam* and his Posterity, and  
" shall all this be in vain?" To this *Jupiter* answers, (130.) which is the last Effort of his Compassion that is just now expiring, "Implacable *Juno*, says he,  
" what then are the great Grounds of  
" Complaint that *Priam* and his Sons  
" have



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“ have given you, that you should con-  
 “ stantly pursue them with so much Pas-  
 “ sion and Revenge, and that you so  
 “ impatiently thirst after the total Ruin  
 “ and Destruction of the beautiful Town  
 “ of *Ilium*? Do better; quit *Olympus*,  
 “ strip yourself of your divine Charac-  
 “ ter, and shut yourself up within the  
 “ Walls of *Troy*; satiate and glut your  
 “ self with the Blood of old *Priam*, and  
 “ that of his Children, and all his Sub-  
 “ jects; then your Hatred perhaps may  
 “ be soften’d, and your Anger calm’d.”  
 Here is a terrible Picture of *Juno*; but  
 indeed Madam D. does not vindicate  
 this Goddess: *She says* (r. 408.) “ That  
 “ she has a little enlarg’d *Homer’s*  
 “ Thought, to put in the clearer and  
 “ better Light the bitter Railery with  
 “ which *Jupiter* reproaches *Juno* for her  
 “ Cruelty, so opposite to the true Tem-  
 “ per and Disposition of the divine Na-  
 “ ture.” In enlarging this Reproach,  
 Madam D. has soften’d it; for the *Greek*  
 literally imports, “ Eat up and devour  
 “ *Priam* and his Children entire, with all  
 “ the *Trojans*.” It is indeed a pleasant  
 and agreeable Character, for the First  
 and Chief of all the Goddesses to be igno-  
 rant of the Duties and Obligations of her  
 State and Condition, and the Decorum  
 of

upon HOMER'S Iliad. 59

of Things. Notwithstanding all which, *Jupiter*, with a mean and effeminate Softness and Complaisance, adds, and says, "Go, do what you desire, and let this Difference be no Occasion of Quarrel and Dissention between us for the future." And becoming himself, all of a sudden, more barbarous than *Juno*, he makes those terrible Terms and Conditions we have above reproach'd *Homer* with, and which it may be proper to give here in his own Words: "But I have one Thing to tell you, and you must take a particular Care to remember it, That when in my Fury I have have resolv'd to destroy any Town you have taken under your Protection, you never oppose my Resentment, nor pretend one Moment to delay the pouring down the Effects of my Anger and Vengeance upon it." *Juno*, who now only listens to her Fury and Rage against the *Trojans*, accepts of the Conditions very readily, (p. 132.) and having deliver'd up to *Jupiter* her three favourite Cities, she concludes thus, (p. 133.) "We must, on these Occasions, mutually yield and submit to one another: This good Understanding will preserve all the other Gods in their Duty and Dependance." You see

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see upon what Occasion this is said; and if this Conversation resembles any thing but a mutual Combination and Conspiracy of two Incendiaries, or if you desire a greater and more noble Comparison for the Persons, tho' not less odious for the Facts, to the Proscription of the *Triumvirate*. Yet Madam D. who near the End of p. 408. was forc'd to say, "That *Homer* represents in *Juno* the  
 "Temper and Genius of too many Women, to whom nothing is so dear,  
 "that they won't sacrifice to their Resentment and Revenge." In the Beginning of p. 409. she says, upon Occasion of the Words of *Juno* just cited, "That *Homer* always scatters up and  
 "down his Verse, Precepts of Morality or Civil Life. Here he shews what  
 "Importance and Necessity there is that a Husband and Wife shou'd have  
 "mutual Complaisance for one another;  
 "for their mutual good Understanding  
 "maintains Order in the Family, and  
 "preserves every one in their Duty." We desire to take no Rule or Example from so vitious a Goddess; and by a Moral which I believe better than *Homer's* and Madam D's. I'll, in my Turn, here take the Freedom to instruct and inform her, that in order to maintain Peace and  
 Tran-



upon HOMER's Iliad. 61

Tranquility in a Family, as well as to preserve its Reputation abroad, a virtuous Wife should be so far from consenting to any Injustice of her Husband's, that she shou'd rather do whatever is possible to excuse and repair it. 'Twas hereby that *Abigail* (1st *Book of Samuel*, ch. xxv.) sav'd her House from the Vengeance and Resentment which *David* would else have inflicted upon it, upon Account of her Husband *Nabal's* Brutality. This cruel Condescension in *Jupiter*, who delivers to *Juno* the *Trojans* he lov'd and favour'd, brings to Mind a short Passage in the 22d *B.* where the same *Jupiter* designs at first to save *Hector*, (p. 262.) but then yielding to *Minerva*, who demanded the Death of this Hero, he himself urges her to finish her Design: "Go, says he, " and do whatever your Heart " can wish or desire, and don't lose a " Moment." But to speak the Truth, it was rather the Necessity of finishing his Verse, than any Design in *Homer*, that occasion'd this last incongruous and superfluous Addition, Don't lose a Moment.

The second Example of *Jupiter's* Goodness is yet more remarkable; it occurs in the 20th *B.* (p. 178.) when *Jupiter*, after having assembled all the Gods,

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Gods, says to them, " I can't see so  
" many brave Persons perish, without  
" being touched with Compassion: I'll  
" go then, and sit upon the Top of O-  
" *lympus*, and view the Battle. But for  
" you, you may descend, and openly  
" espouse the Side you incline to fa-  
" vour." Most of *Homer's* Faults pro-  
ceed from a Mind void of any Princi-  
ples, from want of Judgment, Thought,  
or Reflection, from an Imagination that  
was neither polite nor regular: But  
there are certain Places where he seems  
as if he would insult his Reader, and  
and that he had foreseen how far the ex-  
travagant Excess of human Prejudice  
wou'd extend in his Favour: For what  
can one think of a Poet, who maketh  
the greatest of all the Gods talk thus,  
*I can't see so many brave Persons perish,*  
*without being touch'd with Compassion*; and  
how, instead of concluding, thence he  
must separate them, or if there are Rea-  
sons to suffer them to act, that he shou'd  
go and shut himself up in his Palace,  
that he may'nt be a Spectator of so great  
a Desolation and Destruction, and the  
Effusion of so much human Blood; says  
on the contrary, That he'll go and sit on  
the Top of *Olympus*, that he may the bet-  
ter behold the Battle. I can't think or  
reflect

## upon HOMER's Iliad. 63

reflect upon this without some Pain and Trouble, wherefore I'll a little further examine it. *Homer*, to use *Madam D's* Phrase, (1. 446.) is certainly very capable of making the Gods talk worthy themselves, and suitable to their Characters, if their Nature dispens'd them from speaking common Sense. This is not all; *Jupiter*, who cou'd not see without being much concerned and affected so many brave Persons perish, "Now gives Liberty to all the Deities, whom he had hitherto, by his wise Conduct and Government, kept at a Distance from the Battle." (2. 287.) And who now dividing themselves between the *Greeks* and *Trojans*, animate after the most fatal and destructive Manner the two Parties one against another, both by their Discourse and Example. The Poet himself relates (*B. 22. p. 179.*) what hereupon happen'd; *Juno*, *Pallas*, *Neptune*, *Mercury* and *Vulcan*, engage themselves on the *Greeks* Side: *Mars*, *Apollo*, *Diana*, *Latona*, *Xanthe* and *Venus*, espouse that of the *Trojans*; and in the following Page 180, "The Deities animating the Troops on both Sides, begin the Battle, and engages themselves to Fight." Hereupon *Jupiter*, oblig'd by his Word and Promise to keep out of the Action, entertains



## 64 *A Critical Dissertation*

tertain himself with the Pleasure of thundering among them, (p. 180.) *Juno* perceiving in the Tumult, that *Æneas*, sustain'd by *Apollo*, fought out *Achilles*, signifies her Fear and Apprehension hereof to *Neptune*; who answers her, That he did'nt think it proper that the Gods shou'd fight against the Gods, tho' he himself was then actually guilty of so unworthy and unbecoming an Action. "Let us leave," says he (185.) Mortals to decide their own Quarrel; and removing from the Field of Battle, let us retire to this Eminence, that we may be only Spectators of the Engagement." *Neptune*, as you see here, takes State upon him, blames *Jupiter*, and censures his Conduct; but *Jupiter* not finding his Account in this Retreat, which wou'd make him lose the Sight he promis'd himself, gives immediate Orders to all the Deities (p. 186.) to mix with the two Armies, which they don't fail to do. This is all the Fruit that flows to Men from *Jupiter's* Mercy and Compassion. But as Mens Judgments are different, I shan't omit the Apology which Madam D. makes for this Passage of *Homer*, which appears to me so monstrous and horrid. Here it follows at length: "*Eustafius*, says Madam D. (3. 508.) informs us that the Ancients

upon HOMER'S Iliad. 65

“ cients were very much divided, as to  
“ this Passage of *Homer*: Some of them  
“ have censur'd and criticis'd upon it, and  
“ others have answer'd those Censures  
“ and Criticisms; but he only mentions  
“ the Objections, but did not think it  
“ worth the while to preserve the An-  
“ swers. Those who condemn *Homer*,  
“ say, *Jupiter* is inclin'd to favour the  
“ *Trojans*; he sees the *Greeks* are strong-  
“ er, wherefore it is he permits the Dei-  
“ ties to declare themselves, and engage  
“ in the Battle: But herein this God  
“ was deceiv'd, and don't do what he  
“ design'd; for the Gods, who favour'd  
“ the *Greeks*, being stronger than those  
“ who favour the *Trojans*, the *Greeks*  
“ will still have the Advantage. I don't  
“ know what *Homer's* Friends answer to  
“ this, adds *Madam D.* but in my Opi-  
“ nion, the Objection is more ingen-  
“ ious than solid. *Jupiter* do'nt intend  
“ that the *Trojans* should be stronger than  
“ the *Greeks*; he only designs that the  
“ Decree of Fate shou'd be accomplish'd.  
“ The Fates had determin'd to deny *A-*  
“ *chilles* the Glory of taking *Troy*; but  
“ if *Achilles* had fought against the *Tro-*  
“ *jans*, he alone was capable of forcing  
“ Fate; as *Homer* elsewhere says, That  
“ there had been Men of that Bravery

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“ and Courage, who had been so fortunate : whereas, if the Gods engage in the Quarrel, tho’ those who are in the *Greek* Party and Interest are stronger than those who are for the *Trojans*, yet these last will be strong enough to support Fate, and prevent *Achilles*’ making himself Master of *Troy*. This was *Jupiter*’s sole Design and Intention ; therefore this Passage is so far from being faulty and blameable, that on the contrary, it is extremely fine and beautiful, and infinitely exalts *Achilles*’ Glory.” But in my Opinion, I can see nothing fine or beautiful in all this, besides *Madam D*’s Courage to insist upon Excuses and Apologies, that were omitted even by *Eustasius* himself ; *That good Archbishop of Thessalonica*, (p. 311.) by that Man who did not want common Sense, (Pref. p. 62.) who is no great Critick, who often runs after vain Applications, and spends a great deal of Time about Trifles. This is the Character she herself gives of an Author, who, whether always quoted or not, has yet furnish’d her with above three Quarters of her Criticisms and Remarks.

SECT.



SECT. III.

*That the Poetical Persons themselves in the Iliad own and acknowledge no Justice in Jupiter. That he himself requires none in Men. Lastly, that he was intirely ignorant of it, or had not the least Notion and Idea of it.*

THE Persons in the *Iliad*, whether Gods or Men, have no better Opinion than I of *Jupiter's* Justice. *Minerva* says of him, (*B. 15. p. 353.*) "*Jupiter*, provok'd and exasperated at this, will come and punish us, and confound the Innocent with the Guilty; thus justifying what *Madam D.* had affirm'd, (*3. 620.*) That in *Homer* the Gods always distinguish the Innocent from the Guilty" Even Men themselves don't disguise their Sentiments upon this Subject. *Menelaus* seeing his Sword broken, fighting against *Paris* in the 3d *B.* cries out, (*p. 120.*) "Great *Jupiter*, no, there is no God so cruel and unmerciful as you; I hop'd to have reveng'd my self of *Paris's* Treachery and Perfidy, and here now my

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“ Sword is broken in Pieces.” This is a small Matter: But Madam D’s Remark is extremely curious, (p. 401.) “ Misfortunes, says *Eustafus*, encline “ Men ordinarily to blaspheme: But “ *Menelaus*’ Blasphemy still implies and “ contains a sort of Piety in it; for it “ shews in him a strong Perswasion, that “ God being just, won’t fail to declare “ himself against the Wicked, and to punish “ Perfidy.” We need not wonder, after this, if Madam D. proposes the Prayers of the Heroes in the *Iliad* for a Pattern to our Soldiers. Why have they not, says she, (1. 441.) the Piety of *Homer*’s Heroes, as well as their Valour? But *Menelaus* explains himself better in B. 13. as to the strong Perswasion he had, that God being just would not fail to declare himself against wicked Men, and punish their Perfidy, where he prayeth, (p. 293.) “ Great *Jupiter*, they say that by your “ Wisdom you are above not only all “ Men, but all the other Deities; yet ’tis “ from you that all these Injustices proceed and flow; since ’tis you who thus “ favour those impious Men, that breath “ Violence only, and live by Rapine, “ and can never be satisfy’d with Fights “ and Battles which are still so fatal.” Madam D. thus praises the Discourse whence

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whence this Prayer is taken. "*Homer*,  
" *says she*, (2. 565.) gives us a great  
" Idea of *Menelaus*' Eloquence, when  
" he says he spoke but little, and did  
" not love long Discourses; but what he  
" said was express'd with great Beauty  
" and Strength, and spoke always to  
" the Purpose: We see here a Specimen  
" thereof, for what *Menelaus* here says  
" is of this Character; we find therein  
" an exact Propriety joyn'd with a con-  
" cise Brevity." 'Tis true, that consi-  
dering the whole, the Discourse is good;  
but the Invective that is here inserted  
against *Jupiter*, shews us what is also ob-  
vious every where else, that *Homer*'s best  
Discourses, if of any Length, are never  
without some gross Blunder and Fault.

If the Men in the *Iliad* acknowledge  
no Justice in *Jupiter*, neither does he  
himself require any in them. In *B. 4.*  
(p. 132.) he don't abandon the *Trojans*  
to *Juno*'s Fury and Passion, till after he  
had inform'd this Goddess of the Love  
and Affection he bore them; and upon  
what is this Affection founded? Upon  
the Virtues and good Actions of the *Tro-*  
" *jans*? No, nothing less. " There are no  
" Men, *says he*, I approve of more than  
" *Priam*, and the Subjects of this martial  
" Prince; my Altars at *Troy* were never



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“without Sacrifices, Incense and Libati-  
 “ons; what other Honours could we de-  
 “fire, *adds he*, is not this our Lot and  
 “Portion?” Could he more effectually  
 have said, “It is indifferent to the Gods  
 whether Men are just or unjust; they may  
 ravish and take what they please, either  
 of the Goods or Wives of their Friends  
 and Neighbours, provided our Temples  
 are well serv’d, and there is no Want  
 there of Sacrifices and Hecatombs, we  
 desire nothing more?” *Homer*, who as  
 often repeats his Impieties as his Tri-  
 fles and Impertinences, makes *Jupiter*  
 again say the same Thing, upon Occa-  
 sion of *Hector* in particular, (*B. 24. p.*  
*353.*) “Of all those who inhabit proud  
 “*Ilium*, *Hector* is he whom the Gods  
 “most lov’d, and who was also my own  
 “chief Favourite; for he never omitted  
 “a Day without making us some Pre-  
 “sents; our Altars never wanted Victims,  
 “the Smoak of the Sacrifices ascend-  
 “ed continually to Heaven, with the  
 “sweet smelling Odour of the Incense  
 “and Libations; and this is our sole  
 “Portion.” *Madam D.* must certainly  
 be sensible, from such clear and manifest  
 Tokens, of the infinite Difference there  
 is between the true God and *Homer’s*  
*Jupiter*; for she knows very well with  
 what

upon HOMER's Iliad. 71

what Indignation God in the Scripture rejects external Sacrifices, when they are not accompanied with Praise and Thanksgiving, which imports a Zeal for doing Good, and departing from Evil. "It is not for the Number of Sacrifices and Burnt-Offerings, he himself says, (*Pf.* 49.) that he'll call his People to Account; he don't feed upon them, nor has he any Need of the Animals that are sacrificed to him, they belong to him before they were offer'd; he rejects all such Offerings from those who hate his Laws, and who break the Commandments, who are Robbers and Adulterers; the Sacrifice of Praise is the only one he esteems himself honour'd by, and that will lead them to Happiness and Salvation." These are Discourses full of Greatness and Majesty, with reference to God, and excellent Morality with respect to Men. Compare now those of *Jupiter* with them, and then judge of the Resemblance and Conformity between *Homer* and the Holy Scriptures.

*Lastly*, *Jupiter* not only thinks himself dispensed with from observing the Rules of Justice, and not only dispenses with Men for doing the same, provided his Altars are sufficiently stor'd; but fur-

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ther he is also ignorant of them. *Achilles* is unjust throughout the whole Course of the *Iliad*; he is so with respect to the *Greeks*, and to *Agamemnon* himself, who was his Aggressor; he is so also with respect to *Hector*. All this has already been abundantly prov'd in the preceding Parts of this Work. Madam *D.* herself owns, in several Places, that *Achilles* is neither a good nor a virtuous Man; that he's haughty, proud and insolent, unreasonable and unjust. *Apollo*, in the 24th *B.* (p. 351.) makes a pretty long Discourse, in which he reproaches the Gods in plain Terms, that they condescend and yield to all the Insolencies of wicked *Achilles*, who had no Justice in his Soul, and who exercis'd an implacable Rage upon *Hector's* Body. *Jupiter* himself, awaken'd by these Remonstrances, sends *Thetis* to *Achilles*, to signify to him that his Conduct offended the Gods, and especially himself, who was a severe Punisher of Cruelty and Revenge; at least according to Madam *D's* French Translation, (*B.* 24. p. 356.) for he dare not assume to himself this Praise in the original *Greek*. How then can *Jupiter* say, of the same *Achilles*, two Pages after, (p. 359.) "He's neither rash nor foolish, imprudent nor impious."

Madam



upon HOMER's Iliad. 73

Madam D. instead of being concern'd at this Passage, which expressly contradicts the Judgment she herself had pass'd upon *Achilles*, has still the Goodness to excuse *Jupiter*. "*Achilles*, says she, (p. 596, 597.) is not impious by his Character; nor is he any longer imprudent, because his Mother had admonish'd him; nor is he any more foolish and furious, because his Passion is now satisfied." What Lyon or Tyger would not be calm and easy in this last Case? And don't the Habit of Vices take deeper Root, and grow stronger and stronger in the Mind, by the Gratification and Satisfaction of vicious Desires? Of what Consequence or Importance then, after this, can one imagine is the Praise *Jupiter* gives to *Patroclus* after his Death, when he says (B. 17. p. 70.) "That he was equally eminent for Goodness and Courage" Madam D. being transported with Admiration hereof, cries out, (3. 440.) *What Funeral Panegyrick! and made by whom? By Jupiter himself; who knew so well the Nature of Virtue and Vice, that he said, Achilles, who was a wicked, vicious, passionate and unjust Man, was never an impious one; that he is no longer rash and imprudent, because*

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cause his Mother had admonished him; nor any longer furious, since his Passion was fully satisfied. Can any thing be more unjust, mean or abject, than *Jupiter's* Compliance with *Achilles*, in the Instance of *Hector's* Body, which he won't suffer to be taken from him, that he may the more display his Fame and Glory upon this Occasion? (*B. 24. p. 356.*) "But, adds he, I send *Iris* to King *Priam*, to perswade him to come and  
"redeem his Son, and bring *Achilles*  
"Presents that may pacify his Anger." *Achilles* is far from shewing the same Respect and Compliance to *Jupiter*; for in the same *B. (p. 387.)* he tells *Priam*,  
"Fear, lest *Jupiter's* Order shou'd not  
"prove a sufficient Defence to pre-  
"serve you from my Fury." Accordingly, notwithstanding the Testimony of this God, *F. Bossu* ranks *Achilles* very justly in the Class of furious and impious Men, in the Passage I have cited from him, in the Beginning of the 2d Ch. of the preceding Section.

*Homer* perhaps thought he had sufficiently repair'd the horrid Scandal *Jupiter's* Injustice gives throughout the whole Course of his Poem, by a short Passage inserted in a Comparison of the 16th *B. (p. 25.)* "As sometimes in Harvest,  
"when

*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 75

“ when the Earth groans under the  
“ Storms and Tempests which *Jupiter*,  
“ when provok'd by the Insolence of  
“ Men, pours down upon her; who  
“ to the Contempt of his Laws, and  
“ without regarding his Presence, vio-  
“ late Justice in publick Places, make it  
“ submit to Force, and render it the  
“ Slave of their Passions and Interest.”

Such Passages, instead of being any Ex-  
cuse or Apology for *Homer*, only give  
the finishing Stroke to his Condemna-  
tion; for they shew he had, as all other  
Men have, the just and natural Notions  
and Ideas of the Deity, and his princi-  
pal Attributes and Perfections; and that  
therefore the false and horrid Character  
he gives of the Gods, and especially of *Ju-  
piter*, throughout his Poem, can't be ex-  
cus'd upon either the Account of his Ig-  
norance, or that of the Age in which he  
liv'd.

CHAP.



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### C H A P. III.

*Of the Vindications made for Homer by his Admirers, as to this his Manner of treating and representing the Gods.*

THE Picture or Character we have here given of *Homer's* Deities in the preceding Chapter, can leave but little Room in the Minds of most Persons for the Pleas that are made in his Favour; yet Justice requires that we should here consider and examine them. *F. Bossu*, Mr. and Madam *D.* borrow their first Excuse and Plea from *Aristotle*, who says (*in his Art of Poetry*, Ch. 26.) that *Homer* herein only follow'd the common Opinion and Doctrine. But first, *Homer*, of his own Head and private Authority, corrupted, as we shall presently see, the favourable Idea which even the fabulous Theology itself gave of *Minerva*; who being born from the Brain of *Jupiter* by a Fable, which Madam *D.* says he knew (1. 485.) should have represented Wisdom, and which yet is incomparably the most foolish and impious of all the Deities

*upon* HOMER's *Iliad*. 77

Deities in the *Iliad*. The Inclination *Homer* had to render all his Persons vicious or foolish, prevail'd above what their Birth, the Dignity and Character of several among them, and even the vulgar and common Opinion of that Time required. But supposing that he was not the Author of this Depravation; what is it that a Poet, who is always wise and moral, according to Madam *D*'s usual Expression, had to do with all the Follies and Impieties which the Error, Libertinism, and Immorality of the *Greeks* had produc'd? Why should he have embraced or adopted popular Errors and Opinions, with all their Absurdities and Impiety? Could he neither rectify nor improve them? And allowing even the Substance of the *Pagan* Theology, *i. e.* the Genealogy of their Gods, their Birth and Functions, he ought at least to have added, with reference to *Jupiter*, *Minerva*, and all the superiour Deities, a Character of Justice and Goodness, that had caused them to be lov'd and rever'd by Men. Some inferior Deities, who were of a bad Character, as *Mars*, *Discord*, and others, might have been the Authors of wicked and pernicious Designs, and it had been even fit and proper to make Men  
afraid

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afraid of their Snares and Stratagems ; but the good and benevolent Deities should have always saved and preserv'd their Friends and Favourites. *Virgil* followed those Ideas he found already establish'd and current among the *Romans*, and even those that were in *Homer* ; yet see with what Art he has observ'd, not only the Decorum of Discourse and Conversation among the Deities, but also the Justice of Actions. *Juno* and *Venus* are the Patrons and Protectors of different Nations ; one and the other plead their Cause with so much more Wit and Eloquence, that they don't allow themselves in any Railing nor Invectives against one another ; the Series of Events afterwards furnishes them Means of Reconciliation. *Jupiter*, who is their sovereign Judge, does not give, throughout the whole *Æneids*, one Decision that seems capricious, unjust, or barbarous, as most of those he gives in the *Iliad* are. *Virgil* observes, with regard to the Deities, the wise Rule *Aristotle* gives (25th Ch. *Art of Poetry*) with respect to the Absurdities that occur in some Histories, which the Tragick Poets have chose for the Subjects of their Pieces ; they order it so, that what is absurd in these Histories is still excluded the Plan  
of



upon HOMER's Iliad. 79

of their Tragedies: Thus *Virgil* admitting in general the receiv'd Opinion concerning the Deities, leaves out of his Poem whatever it contain'd impious or ridiculous; and never makes them act throughout the *Æneids* but with Justice and Decorum. Or at least, if the Deities there act some Things which won't bear the Test of the severest Scrutiny and Examination, 'tis *Homer* only who is to be blam'd; 'twas he, who, by the Advantage of his Talents and Age, was in some sort Master of the Impressions and Opinions which succeeding Ages should receive of their Deities: For to conclude, 'tis not true what some have fancied, that in order to please we must always comply with prevailing Errors and popular Prejudices; on the contrary, Truth well explain'd yields a double Pleasure, both by the new Light it strikes up in the Mind, and by the Conquest and Victory it gives us over vulgar Errors. Whatever Opinion therefore of the Deities *Orpheus* had spread among the *Greeks*; all wise and thinking Persons, and even the common People themselves, would have been charm'd to have seen that impious Poet contradicted by *Homer*: Because indeed nothing is so pleasing or agree-

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agreeable, as a Work that draws from the first Principles of Reason, and the Make and Frame of a humane Mind, the true System of Morality and all the other Parts of Philosophy, which Education and common Reading and Conversation generally only stifle and extinguish.

Another Apology for *Homer* Madam D. makes, is, that he represents in the Characters of his Deities the Irregularities and Disorders that often happen in the Houses of the greatest Princes. (I. 320.) It is in this Manner she excuses that fine Discourse of *Jupiter*, who, after having patiently bore the Reproaches he expected from *Juno* for the Succours and Assistance he gave the *Trojans* against the *Greeks*, says to her, (B. I. p. 37.) " Sit down and be easy; assure yourself that if I once make you feel the Weight of my invincible Arm, all the Gods who inhabit Olympus shan't be able to deliver you." But allowing it were true, that *Jupiter* threatening *Juno* with a sound Beating, and having actually already beat her more than once, (p. 39.) represented the greatest Princes, and not the viler Populace; was it proper or lawful for *Homer* to take the superiour Deities for

upon HOMER's *Iliad*. 81

an Example of vicious or ridiculous Actions, to which Princes themselves were subject? Is this the Use that a divine Poet, such as they term *Homer*,\* ought to make of the Deities, and the Respect he is to inspire his Readers with for them? Secondly, Is it his Business only to paint or represent? And a Poet who is always Moral, ought he not to distinguish in his Characters, those which authorize Vice, from those that correct and condemn it? Can we doubt but the Actions we see *Jupiter* do, will furnish Men with a Justification or Excuse, that will have but too great Weight and Influence over them? See how *Chærea* in *Terence* makes use of the Example of *Jupiter*, with Reference to *Danae*, to excuse and justify his Passion in the *Eunuch*; a Play very well known in our Language, by Madam D.'s excellent Translation thereof. What Boldness in more unjust and criminal Attempts, don't *Jupiter* inspire in *Plautus' Amphytrion*, so well translated also by the same Hand, and which has also had so great Success in *Molier's* Imitation of it? This God is much more effectually proposed as an Example to imitate, in this Passage of the *Iliad*, than

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\* Madam D.'s Pref. p. 17.



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in *Amphytrion*: For throughout the Comedy of *Plautus* and *Molier*, *Jupiter* is represented as indeed guilty of an unjust and immoral Action; and we can't think of him, from the Beginning to the End of the Play, but as an Adulterer; but in the Conversation which *Homer* supposes here between *Jupiter* and *Juno*, *Jupiter* sustains the Character of the supreme God himself, by these Words he speaks to *Juno*, (p. 35.) "Don't hope to enter into my Council." Upon which *Madam D.* makes this Remark, (p. 323.) "*Homer*, by this Fiction, very well instructs us, that the Secrets of God and his Providence, which he displays in the Conduct and Government of the Universe, are impenetrable; and that Men, and even Angels themselves, know only what he pleases to reveal to them." In the Words which follow two Lines after, "You shall know all that is fit and proper you shou'd know," he represents a prudent Husband. "*Homer* informs us here, says *Madam D.* in the same Place, That there are Things which Husbands shou'd communicate to their Wives, and that there are others they shou'd keep conceal'd." Why then will they have him in the same Discourse, when

upon HOMER's Iliad. 83

when he threatens to beat *Juno*, represent a brutal and vicious Prince, that brings Disorders and Confusion into his Family, by bearing the Princess his Spouse? Mayn't another Admirer of *Homer* tell us, that this Poet here very well instructs us that we should punish and chastize our Wives, when they would oppose or contradict us? They answer, perhaps, that 'tis the Nature of Things that clears up this Distinction, and makes them judge whether the Character is design'd to recommend, or expose and condemn the Thing represented: But if so, the Instruction lies no longer in the Words and Expression of the Poet, but wholly in the Interpretation of the Reader; and he ought also to be very knowing and intelligent, to be able to distinguish the good and bad Examples that are mix'd and confounded in the Person of a Superiour, who ought only to give good ones. They'll say, Lastly, That a Poet's Business is only to paint or represent justly; and they'll confirm this by a remarkable Passage from *Madam D.'s Preface*. "The End and Design of Poetry is  
" to imitate, *says she*, (*p. 21. 23.*) there-  
" fore *Plato* was in the wrong to con-  
" demn Poetry, when he found it not  
" agreeable to the Rules a good Politi-

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“ cian wou’d give for the Prosperity and  
 “ Happiness of a State; there’s nothing  
 “ more unjust, *adds she*, for the same  
 “ Imitation may be vicious, when Politi-  
 “ cally consider’d, which is excellent when  
 “ Poetically consider’d.” I answer to  
 this, that Madam D. absolutely retracts  
 this Decision in the same *Preface*, when  
 she lays it down for a Rule (*p. 67, and*  
*69,*) that the principal Object of Poetry,  
 but especially Epick Poetry, is to instruct,  
 and not to please and divert; this is what  
 she expressly affirms, not as in *p. 23.*  
 that the Design of Poetry is to Imitate,  
 but *p. 69.* that an Epick Poem has for  
 its principal Scope the Instruction of the  
 Reader: But whether we are of the O-  
 pinion in *p. 23.* or that in *p. 69.* as to  
 the principal Scope of Poetry, every  
 wise Man, as well as *Plato*, will banish  
 all Poetry and Painting, that is so con-  
 trary, as *Homer’s* is, to the fundamen-  
 tal Principles even of natural Religion,  
 the Happiness of Government, and the  
 Prosperity of a People or Nation. We  
 must then distinguish in Mr. D.’s Propo-  
 sition in his Notes upon *Aristotle’s Art*  
 of Poetry, *p. 428.* when he says, The  
 Faults a Poet commits, speaking of an  
 Art he is not sufficiently instructed in,  
 are more excusable, than those he com-  
 mits



upon HOMER's Iliad. 85

mirs against the Laws of Poetry itself; for if a Poet transgresses only against the Rules of an Art that don't concern Morality, such as that of a *Farrier*, whence the Example he instances is taken of a Horse, whose two Right Feet we shou'd make him lift up at the same Time, I own that the Fault would be slight, tho' he shou'd endeavour even to avoid this; but if the Poet transgresses against the Rules of Morality, or against certain fundamental Articles of true Politicks, which have a necessary Dependance upon this, his Fault is then infinitely greater, than if he only transgressed the Rules of Poetry; or rather, he herein transgresses against the most essential and fundamental Laws of Poetry, by contradicting that moral Instruction which is its principal Scope and Design, according to Madam D.'s second Opinion. But Lastly, even supposing the sole Design of Poetry were to imitate, and to please by such Imitation, *Homer* transgresses even against this, by representing his Gods or Princes in so very low, absurd and ridiculous a Light; and which we shou'd therefore, according to *Horace's* Rule, omit and abandon, because of the Impossibility there is in treating it, so as to beautify or adorn it: *Et quæ desperes*

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*tractata nitescere posse relinquo.* And indeed, *Jupiter* beating *Juno* can't please either the Readers who seek Instruction, or those who only seek Pleasure and Diversion; but is shocking in all Respects. And 'tis upon this Account therefore that *Madam D.* has her last Recourse to Allegory, as her third Resource: Who perceives not, *says she*, at the End of her *Remarks*, (1. 325.) that *Homer* under this Representation and Emblem, explains the Action of the Elements. This brings us to the Subject of Allegories, which requires a particular Dissertation.

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### C H A P. IV.

*Which contains a particular Dissertation upon the Allegories of Homer.*

THE Subject of Allegories is so extensive, that we shall be necessarily oblig'd to draw out this *Chapter* to some Length. But I dare flatter myself that it will be found curious; and that 'twill make the Reader, already tir'd out with the usual obscure and chimerical Discourses of Ignorance and Prejudice, relish

upon HOMER's Iliad. 87

relish the more the Novelty, Clearness and Solidity of Philosophical Reasoning, when apply'd to polite Learning and the *Belles Lettres*.

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S E C T. I.

*Containing General Reflections upon Homer's Allegories.*

WE shou'd not take *Homer* to task as to the Allegories ascrib'd to him, if his Fables and Fictions had any reasonable Foundation; and if we were only concern'd with the Glosses of his Commentators, we shou'd only admire the Simplicity of those who thought they found, in some Poetical Fictions, the Principles of all Arts and Sciences, and Rules belonging to all the several States and Conditions of humane Life; and lament the Extravagance and Absurdity of those who pretend to find therein the Philosopher's Stone, the Science of Judiciary Astrology, and even the Gift of Prophecy. *Homer's* Poems, such as they are, have presented all those different Senses to their several Admirers, according to the Degree of their Mad-



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ness or Folly; even the learn'd *Fabricius* has collected the Examples: \* But this is not what we wou'd make *Homer* responsible for; his great Crime independently of Allegories, real or feign'd, is that he has made a very impious Use of the Deity. The Friends and Admirers of this Poet have embrac'd with Joy the Expedient of Allegories, to excuse him herein; they have thought thereby to disarm us of all the Principles of Reason and Religion, which we might employ against their Author, and place him in Safety by a System, where one may say any thing, and against which no Objection can well conclude: Philosophy won't permit us to pay any Regard to so weak and ridiculous a Defence; but we will subject even Allegories themselves to the first and most fundamental of all the Laws of Learning, but especially that of the *Belles Lettres*, which is to give no Offence or Scandal to the Readers. For this Law in a more particular Manner regards those Compositions, which are only design'd to please, or instruct only by pleasing, than any other whatever; because what we have term'd the Law of the first Aspect, or

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\* *Bibl. Græca*, Tom. 1. B. 2. Ch. 6.

Appear-

*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 89

Appearance, as we have already observed elsewhere, absolutely decides concerning that Sort of Writings. It is not the same with Writings treating of more serious Subjects. In Law, and even Divinity, there are certain Propositions, which may not at first Sight appear agreeable either to Truth or Justice, and which yet are so; therefore we must not suppress them, because there's Time allow'd in that sort of Compositions for a free and thorough Examination and Discussion, fully to explain and unfold them: But in a Poem, or any other Work design'd for mere Pleasure or Amusement, whenever a Passage appears shocking to the general Taste, there's neither any secret Meaning or Intention of the Author, nor forc'd Explication of a Commentator, can ever excuse it; the Author ought to have rejected it, and the Commentator condemn'd it; because neither the Passage nor the Poem itself were necessary.

Tho' *Homer* had only design'd his Poem for a Work of Amusement, without any Instruction, either express'd, or disguis'd and conceal'd, he had been highly to blame to have amus'd and diverted his Readers at the Expence of Religion: But if his Design  
was

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was to instruct, as his Admirers affirm, and to become herein a more useful and moral Author, than even any of the Philosophers themselves; as *Horace* thought; especially if he intended to explain to us any thing relating to the Attributes and Decrees of God, as *Madam D.* in so many of her Remarks affirms; he is still infinitely more to blame to have spoke of the Deity with so little Decorum and Decency; because an Author, who wou'd teach any important Articles in Religion or Morality, can't acquire Credit with his Readers, but by an extreme Care and Attention to all his Words and Expressions.

Tho' Morality is the only true Spring and Source of the Beauties of the greater Poetry, according to the System we have elsewhere sufficiently explain'd and establish'd, yet we shou'd have excus'd *Homer* from knowing or employing this Secret at the first Rise and Birth of Poetry and Morality; and this so much the more, as that now when both have been so long cultivated and improved, we still see many Persons who require no moral Scope or Design, even in the greatest and noblest Poems; but 'tis abominable and intolerable, to sully and pollute, with the grossest Impieties, not only



*upon* HOMER'S *Iliad*. 91

only his Poem, but even his Instructions; and he had much better not have given any.

F. *Bossu* (*B. 5. Ch. 2.*) says, that Poems ought to be Allegorical Instructions. As 'tis to justify *Homer*, that he advances this Proposition, 'tis plain that by Allegorical Instructions, he means hidden and conceal'd ones, since *Homer* has no other. But tho' we shou'd allow him here, that a Poet ought thus to disguise his Instructions, (the contrary of which we shall sufficiently afterwards shew and demonstrate,) yet the least that could be demanded, if those Instructions are obscure, is, that all the Damage redounding thence shou'd be our not fully understanding or apprehending them, and that they shou'd leave no bad or vicious Impression upon the Mind.

If *Virgil* had any Design to write allegorically, he has observ'd this Rule, by the Testimony of F. *Bossu* himself. " *Virgil*, says this Author, (*B. 1. Ch. 18.*)  
" delivering his Doctrine and Instructions allegorically, did not satisfy himself with so simple an external Form and  
" Appearance as *Homer*, who too much  
" shocks those who don't penetrate enough into his true Meaning, and are  
" ignorant that he spoke figuratively:  
The

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" The *Roman* Poet has therefore so con-  
 " triv'd his Fable, that even those who  
 " go not beyond the first and obvious  
 " Sense, shall yet be pleas'd with what  
 " they find there. This Method is en-  
 " tirely agreeable to ours, and perfectly  
 " suited to the present Taste." And can  
 right Reason suffer any other? What  
 signifies F. *Bossu* telling us after this,  
 (*ib.*) " But I don't know if the Plea-  
 " sure and Satisfaction we so easily  
 " find only in such Fables and Fictions,  
 " is not really injurious to us; the  
 " sooner we stop, the less we seek after  
 " the Truth of Things." Would F. *Bossu*  
 conclude hence, that a Poet had better  
 make use of foolish and ridiculous Fa-  
 bles, than wise and reasonable Ones,  
 because the Readers are less inclin'd to  
 understand the first literally than the se-  
 cond? " This may indeed make the  
 " Word *Fable* a little ambiguous, adds  
 " he, which we apply in so different a  
 " Sense to Epick Poetry, and the Fables  
 " of *Esop*." 'Tis not we who make this  
 different Application; on the contrary,  
 we are perswaded that the Fable of  
 an Epick Poem should be like those of  
*Esop*, viz. clear and plain, whose al-  
 legorical Sense is so easy to discover,  
 that it were even needless to explain it.

*Homer*

upon HOMER's Iliad. 93

*Homer* has contriv'd his Fables and Fictions very different in this Respect from *Esop's*. *F. Bossu* had told us before (*ib.*) "Our Age, tho' otherwise so learn'd and curious, neglects extremely the Knowledge of Allegories." He's mistaken in this Particular, and Allegories well treated will be always relish'd and esteem'd; for, without mentioning the allegorical Persons which are so often introduc'd in our Operas, and in several of our amorous and satyrical Pieces, *Mr. Fontaine* has render'd Fables far more pleasing and agreeable than ever they were yet in any other Part of the World. "Tis perhaps this Negligence," adds *F. Bossu*, that conceals from us some of the greatest Beauties of *Homer*; and which, instead of his great Art and Skill, shews us only the outward Bark and Superficies, which is indeed too simple and gross to make us judge to any Advantage of his Wit and Conduct." *Homer* had Reason to adapt himself to the Taste of his own Age and Time, by making Use of Allegories, since they were then in Vogue and Reputation. 'Tis thus that the best and most venerable Authors in Religion have sometimes conform'd themselves



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themselves to the Taste of the Age in which they liv'd, to make their Instructions the better receiv'd and understood; but does this in any Manner justify that sort of Allegories which *Homer* uses? A general Taste and Liking of Allegories, is the distinguishing Character of those Ages that were not sufficiently acquainted with the great Sources, with which Reason and Nature furnish Eloquence and Poetry; but what Age, how gross and ignorant soever, requir'd that Allegories should wear the Appearance of Impiety and Blasphemy? But allowing, to mention this once more, that such a horrid Practice, and infamous Example or Precedent, had been introduc'd by any former Writers, it was the Duty of a great Man, such as *Homer*, to change and reform it. And what signifies it, indeed, to set up for an Author, if we don't contribute to cure the Age of some Error or Vice? *Plato* himself would not accept the Excuse taken from the Age in which *Homer* liv'd; for tho' he knew that Age much better than *F. Bossu*, yet he condemn'd that Poet's Fictions with so much good Sense, and so clearly and distinctly, that I can't forbear here relating his Reasons; he gives us them in the second Book  
of

*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 95

of his *Common-wealth*. " We shou'd  
" not receive, says he, into our City  
" either the Chains of *Juno* made by  
" her own Son; nor the Fall of *Vulcan*  
" thrown down from Heaven to Earth,  
" for defending his Mother against *Ju-*  
" *piter*, when he beat her; nor the  
" rest of the Battles of the Gods in-  
" vented by *Homer*: For whether those  
" Ideas serve only as a Cover to some-  
" thing else, and the Poet wou'd give  
" us to understand something quite dif-  
" ferent from what is express'd; or  
" whether he gives us them simply for  
" what they are and appear; young  
" Persons have no Capacity to distin-  
" guish these different Views; and the  
" Opinions with which they are pos-  
" sess'd in their early Years, are sel-  
" dom or never again defac'd, but  
" with great Trouble and Difficulty.  
" Wherefore we must always represent  
" the Deity to them as true and just  
" in all his Ways and Works. And  
" indeed, he's ever constant to his Pro-  
" mises, and never seduces or deceives  
" Men, either by vain Representations  
" and Images, or false Discourses or  
" or deceitful Signs, either in the  
" Day-time, or during the Silence of the  
" Night." I am surpriz'd and astonish-  
ed

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ed that *Plato*, having known this Way of Reasoning, shou'd ever have relish'd any other; and that a Philosopher, who was so sensible of the Danger of Allegories, shou'd yet have stuff'd his Doctrines, his Principles and Morality, so much with them: For what Snares don't he himself lay for Youth, when in his *Phedo*, having introduced *Socrates* making a long Discourse of the Immortality of the Soul, in which the Existence of the true God is strongly proved, at least in the Opinion of Mr. *D.* in his Notes upon it, he makes the same *Socrates* afterwards sap the Foundation of his Doctrine, and overthrow his own System, like a House of Cards, in those unhappy Words he speaks to *Crito*, as he was drawing his last Breath: "We owe a Cock to *Æsculapius*, do you perform this Vow for me, and be sure not to forget it." To which *Crito* answers, *It shall be done.* Whereupon Mr. *D.* is oblig'd to make the following Remark; "Those who are not appriz'd of *Socrates*' true Meaning, have accus'd him here of Idolatry and Superstition, in vowing this Cock to *Æsculapius*: But these Words are not to be understood literally; they are *Ænigmatical*, as well as an infinite Number



upon HOMER's Iliad. 97

“ber of other Passages we read in  
“*Plato*, and which we shall never un-  
“derstand if we han't recourse to Fi-  
“gures and Allegories: The Cock  
“here is the Symbol of Life, and *Æs-*  
“*culapius* is the Emblem of the Physi-  
“cian; and *Socrates* only means by  
“this, That he resigns his Soul into  
“the Hands of the true Physician, to  
“heal and purify it.” As for me, be-  
fore I have recourse here to any Alle-  
gory, I am fully satisfy'd, that if *Socra-*  
*tes* is such as *Plato* represents him;  
which *Socrates* himself, who complain'd  
of his Dialogues, was far from allow-  
ing; he was twenty times a more cap-  
tious and sophistical Caviller and Rea-  
soner than all the Sophists whom he  
ridicules, whose Actions did not agree  
with his Principles, and who at least was  
indifferent whether the Truths he knew  
were understood or believed by his Au-  
ditors and Disciples; for even supposing  
that he meant what they make him say  
here of *Æsculapius* and his Cock, yet  
'tis certain *Crito* understands it literally,  
and so commits an Act of Idolatry:  
But supposing *Crito* understood it a-  
right, will all his Readers understand  
it so? Are they all in a Capacity to  
decipher here his true Design and In-  
H                      tention?

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tention? And, Was this a Subject about which it is lawful to leave any the least Doubt or Ambiguity? And, Can one think that a Man would talk allegorically at the Point of Death? Or, lastly, if *Socrates* would do so, Was it not the Duty of *Plato*, his Interpreter, fully and clearly to have explained it to us?

*Pythagoras*, another Author who had a great Esteem for Allegories, yet says, according to Mr. D.'s own Account (*in his Remarks upon the Art of Poetry*, p. 435.) "That *Homer* was cruelly tormented in Hell, for having dispersed "up and down in his Poems so many "Fables injurious to the Deity." 'Tis true, indeed, that *Pythagoras* gave no Scandal by his *Enigmata*; his Allegories are only obscure; he thought he should wrap up and conceal, under very foreign Images, even such plain and simple Precepts as those that follow, That we should not lie, nor defame our Neighbour; it wou'd seem as if he envied Virtue to other Men; or, as if he wou'd make even the Principles of common Honesty, the Secrets of a Sect and Party. Undoubtedly this is none of the lawful Uses of Emblems and Symbols in Morality. There may be Reasons with Respect to the Multitude, some-  
times

upon HOMER's Iliad. 99

times to hide and conceal the profound Maxims of Politicks and the Government of States ; and this is perhaps what *Solomon* calls the *Enigmata* of the Wise, *Verba Sapientum & Ænigmata eorum*, Prov. i. 6. It is not the same with Reference to the Precepts of common Morality. *Æsop*, whom I judge the only ancient *Greek* Author who has made a good Use of the symbolical Way of Writing, used them chiefly to give a slight Exercise to the Mind, that so it might discover with the greater Pleasure the Moral and Instruction, which lay hid under a very thin and as 'twere transparent Veil and Covering; or else it furnishes a natural, easy, and pleasant Comparison, which the better helps to make us apprehend and retain a Truth that had not been so obvious and sensible if presented by it self: In a Word, *Æsop* never made Use of Allegories but the better and more effectually to insinuate the Moral he intended, whereas *Pythagoras* only used them to hide and conceal them; but *Homer*, and even *Plato* himself, do what is still much worse, since the Allegories they use offer what is immoral and vicious in the most obvious and apparent Sense, and long before we can possibly find out or



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discover any other: The Allegory includes a Precept of Morality, but the literal Sense presents an Example of Impiety; the Allegory inspires Virtue, but the obvious and literal Sense justifies and authorizes Vice; the Allegory is only understood by a small Number of the Wise and Learned, who don't want Instruction, and the literal Sense corrupts the Generality of Men who want to be instructed. After all, if *Pythagoras* and *Plato*, both Pagans and ancient Philosophers; one of them born in an Age that was almost barbarous, the other among a People who allow'd a great Freedom of Thought and Expression in Poetry, and both great Lovers of Allegory, yet cou'd not relish those of *Homer*; why shou'd they expect we shou'd judge them admirable,\* or that they shou'd render *Homer* so esteemable and valuable to us? † We, whom the true Religion has undeceiv'd as to all the Fables of Paganism, whom the new Philosophy has accusom'd to Reason and Evidence, whom the Politeness of our Age and Nation has given an Aversion to all that's low and mean, gross or coarse, in Writings of all Sorts, but especially those of Heroic Poetry.

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\* *Arist. Art of Poetry*, p. 435.

† *Pref. to Homer*, p. 17.

But

upon HOMER's Iliad. 101

But why shou'd we seek in *Plato* and *Pythagoras* for Principles that condemn *Homer*, since *F. Bossu* himself explains them so admirably to us? " 'Tis true, says  
" *he*, (*B. 5. Ch. 2.*) That the first Men  
" of Learning, and our original Authors,  
" have acted insincerely in an Affair of  
" the last Importance, when they have  
" wrote in such a Manner, that Men of  
" common Talents, and who are but  
" little instructed, *i. e.* almost all Men,  
" cou'd not penetrate the Bark and Veil  
" with which they covered Truth; and  
" so they have been miserably abus'd  
" in taking the Shadow for the Sub-  
" stance, and bold and dangerous Fi-  
" gures for necessary and important  
" Truths. Whether it was Pride, Envy,  
" Error, or evil Conduct, that occasion-  
" ed this, it was undoubtedly a very  
" great Fault, and which we don't pre-  
" tend in the least to excuse or vindi-  
" cate." But *F. Bossu*, immediately af-  
ter having said he wou'd not in the least  
excuse this Fault which he terms very  
great, yet instantly undertakes, not only to  
excuse, but to commend and praise the  
Author who of all others was the most  
guilty; and goes on thus: " But in  
" Pursuance of our Design, we may o-  
" mit the Interpretations which a Poet

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“ is not obliged to give, and only con-  
 “ sider Poems as Compositions and In-  
 “ structions, which ought to be all alle-  
 “ gorical. And in this Sense is it not  
 “ more easy to defend *Homer*, than to  
 “ accuse and condemn him, and more  
 “ just to praise than to blame him?  
 “ Can he be censur'd for having men-  
 “ tion'd a Plurality of Deities, and en-  
 “ dowing them with Passions? Might  
 “ not he even arm them, and make them  
 “ fight against Men? Have not we Ex-  
 “ amples of those Expressions and Fi-  
 “ gures in the sacred Writings, both of  
 “ the Old and New Testament? And if  
 “ 'tis allow'd to speak thus of Gods as  
 “ a Divine, then with much more Rea-  
 “ son may they be so represented in the  
 “ Fictions and Fables of Morality and  
 “ natural Philosophy. When in those  
 “ two Sciences we describe the Nature  
 “ of Things, there's no more Harm to  
 “ express what they have bad, than  
 “ what they contain that is good. One  
 “ must be very ignorant in Poetry, and  
 “ have made very little Reflection upon  
 “ the Manner of Expression in that sort  
 “ of Writing, to imagine that when the  
 “ Name of a God or Goddess occurs, we  
 “ shou'd meet with nothing represented  
 “ but what is beautiful, good and adora-  
 “ ble



upon HOMER's Iliad. 103

“ ble in those Persons; as if *Virgil*  
“ cou'd not say of *Fame*, she was a dis-  
“ honest Goddess; and of *Sleep*, this  
“ Deity was malicious, when he de-  
“ ceiv'd the good *Palinurus*, and threw  
“ him down into the Sea. There is no  
“ more hurt in speaking thus in Verse,  
“ than there is to say in Prose, that  
“ *Fame* every Day publishes false and  
“ scandalous Stories, and that *Palinurus*  
“ being asleep fell into the Sea.” As  
this is what *Homer's* Admirers have most  
considerable to say, 'tis proper fully to  
answer and confute this Apology. *F.*  
*Bossu* says, that a Poet is not oblig'd to  
give Explications in his Poem; I own  
it, and that often he wou'd thereby only  
spoil his Poetry; and therefore he ought  
to avoid and forbear whatever needs  
such Explication, and say nothing but  
what explains it self, as in *Æsop's* Fa-  
bles; whence we may cut off what is  
term'd the *Epimythion*, and yet the Mo-  
ral be clearly and perfectly understood.  
It is in this Sense also I allow Poems  
ought to be allegorical Instructions;  
which teach us, under the sensible Images  
of feign'd Persons, to conduct our selves  
wisely and prudently in all the different  
Instances of Life. He says further, that  
we can't reprove *Homer* for having given

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Passions to several Deities : I own it ; but I deny that we should ever ascribe to the Deity Vices or evil Actions, as *Homer* does to *Jupiter*. Wherefore does *F. Bossu* and *Madam D.* who adopts his Reasoning, † pretend to be ignorant, that the Passions not being vicious in themselves, there may be either a bad or a good Use made of them ; and therefore the sacred Writers don't dishonour the Deity by ascribing Anger or Compassion to him, according to our Manner of Conception, as *Homer* does *Jupiter*, by making him to be guilty of so many capricious, fantastical and unjust Actions? *F. Bossu* says, concluding this Argument, that *Virgil* might represent *Fame* as a dishonest Goddess, and *Sleep* as a malicious one : This is likewise granted ; but these are only inferiour and subordinate Deities, and who have even preserv'd the very Names of the Things they personate and represent, whose Character is indifferent, or rather inclines to Evil, and which in this last Sense were the same among the Pagans as evil Spirits or the fallen Angels are now among Christians : But what can this conclude for *Jupiter*, by whom *Madam D.* will

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† P. 15. of her *Preface* to *Homer*.

upon HOMER'S Iliad. 105

have us always understand the supreme God, and for *Juno*, whom she still supposes a good Angel? (1. 323.) But *F. Bossu* has inserted into his Argument a Reference to the Holy Scriptures, to which therefore we must return a particular Answer.

And first, "With respect to every Thing which, literally taken, might appear unworthy of the Majesty and Sanctity of those Writings, and contrary to Truth and Justice," to use Mr. D.'s Expressions, who employs *F. Bossu's* Reason, (*p. 441. of the Art of Poet.*) I observe, that taking the Holy Scriptures altogether, they breathe nothing from one End to the other, but the Equity and Goodness of a God full of Justice and Mercy; therefore the Passages which are obscure, or which may even seem harsh to us, much more from our Ignorance and Want of Capacity, than that they are so in themselves, are illustrated and interpreted by an infinitely greater Number of other Passages, where God is represented such as he really is, *i. e.* as the Source and Model of all Sanctity and Goodness: In *Homer*, on the contrary, we see, as 'twere, a form'd Resolution of representing the Gods in the most odious Colours,



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Colours, arbitrary, violent, and unjust; we have scarce finish'd one infamous and scandalous Passage of this sort, before we meet with another yet worse. 'Tis only by mere Chance, and very rarely, that these wretched Deities say or act any Thing we can in the least approve of.

Secondly, Allowing it true, as 'tis indeed, that the Holy Spirit had purposely left some obscure Passages in the Sacred Writings, either to exercise the Faith of Believers, or to conceal from sensual and carnal Men, and Unbelievers, Mysteries of which they are unworthy; two Reasons which can never be applied to a prophane Poet; the Danger of Allegories, and all other Obscurities in the Sacred Writings, is prevented by the Principle that teaches us that the Church is the universal and infallible Interpreter of them. This is the Answer that Cardinal *Cajetan* adds to that of *St. Thomas*: The Angelical Doctor had said, (*p. 1. Q. 1. Art. 10.*) that the Multiplicity of the Senses of the Holy Scripture, such as the moral and allegorical, can introduce no Confusion in the Sacred Text; not only because all these Senses are founded upon the literal, from which alone we can  
bring

*upon* HOMER'S Iliad. 107

bring any Proof or Argument, according to St. *Augustin*, whom he cites ; but also because these other Senses contain nothing necessary to Faith or Salvation, if the literal Sense don't express the same clearly in some other Place. The learned Cardinal adds, that supposing even we cou'dnt find another clearer Passage of the Scriptures to compare with an obscure one, yet we can never be at a Loss to compare it with the Exposition and Interpretation of the Church, which is that upon which the Certainty of the Text of Scripture itself depends. But *Homer* had no Reason to expect that Commentators shou'd give a good Sense to his impious and ridiculous Fictions relating to the Gods ; and shou'd have consider'd, if even any such shou'd be found, that they wanted the Authority necessary to make such their Interpretations be admitted or receiv'd. I can't therefore regret with Mr. *D.* the Loss of *Damos*' Book, Daughter to *Pythagoras*, upon the Allegories of *Homer*, unless as a Monument of Antiquity, and perhaps only of human Visions and Dreams, which are always curious : But with respect to the understanding *Homer*, *Damos*' Interpretations had neither been more happy nor more infallible, than that of all the Mytho-

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bring



*upon* HOMER'S Iliad. 107

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Mythologists we find in Mr. Gale's Collection, and especially of *Heraclides*, a great Defender of our Poet against *Plato* himself.

The Admirers of *Homer*, who give him the magnificent Titles and Epithets of a Natural, Moral, and Divine Poet, pretend to find in the *Iliad* alone all these three sorts of Allegories, where the Gods serve always for Symbols; against the Custom and Practice of most other emblematical Authors, who have commonly taken their Symbols from material Objects. These three sorts of Allegories are the Theological, the Moral, and the Physical Ones. In the Theological Allegories, the Wisdom and Decrees of God are propos'd to us under the Names of *Minerva* and *Apollo*: In the Moral Ones, the Vices and Virtues are represented to us, and *Minerva* again appears there as the Virtue of Prudence, and *Mars* and *Venus* are brought upon the Scene as signifying unreasonable Passions: Lastly, In the Physical Allegories, some natural Effects are explain'd to us, viz. either the more secret Ones, as the Shock of the Elements in the Quarrel between *Jupiter* and *Juno*; or the more obvious and sensible Ones, as a Drought or Famine,

a De

upon HOMER's *Iliad*. 109

a Deluge or Inundation in the Fight of *Vulcan* and *Scamander*. We shall now examine *Homer* under each of these Articles, or in these his three Sorts of Allegories.

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SECT. II.

*Of the Theological Allegories.*

*Minerva*, according to Mr. D. (2. 609.) is properly the Wisdom of God: Indeed it was natural enough to understand it after this Manner; but *Homer* was not Master of this Character, it having been before determin'd by the Fable of the Birth of *Minerva*, which, according to Madam D. he understood very well (1. 485.) and which in Effect he has made Use of in his 5th B. (p. 233.) yet those who find nothing in the *Iliad* but what really occurs there, will easily perceive that this Goddess, by whom they wou'd have us believe is allegorically meant the Divine Wisdom, is really the most foolish and the worst of all the Deities in the *Iliad*. Both these Qualities very conspicuously appear in the Discourse she makes

to



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to *Juno* upon Occasion of *Hector*; (B. 8. p. 57.) “ Long ago this Madman, says  
 “ she, must have lost his Life, by the  
 “ Skill and Prowess of the *Greeks*, had  
 “ not my Father, who is always cruel  
 “ and inflexible, been without those Sen-  
 “ timents he ought to have; he always  
 “ opposes me, and by this Piece of In-  
 “ justice, has render’d all my Efforts  
 “ and Endeavours of no Use; he for-  
 “ gets how often I have sav’d his Son  
 “ from those imminent Dangers the  
 “ Commands of *Eristheus* had engag’d  
 “ him in. When he was exposed to in-  
 “ evitable Death, he implor’d by his  
 “ Tears the Assistance of Heaven, and  
 “ *Jupiter*, touch’d with Compassion, sent  
 “ me to his Relief: Ah! if I cou’d but  
 “ have foreseen what now I find, when  
 “ this Tyrant sent him to the infernal  
 “ Palace of the inexorable *Pluto*, with  
 “ Orders to bring from the Bottom of  
 “ *Erebus* that terrible Monster which  
 “ guards its Entrance, he shou’d never  
 “ have re-pass’d the hideous Waves of  
 “ the River *Styx*: Now, as a Return  
 “ of Gratitude, *Jupiter* hates me.” Can  
 any Thing be more ridiculous than this  
 Rebellion, and these bitter Complaints  
 and Expostulations of the Wisdom of  
*Jupiter* against himself? Can any Thing  
 be

upon HOMER's Iliad. III

be more abject, than *Minerva's* repenting she had fav'd *Hercules*, who is actually now in the Number of the Gods, and therefore no ways concern'd nor responsible for the Protection his Father here gives *Hector*? Yet even all these Indignities have not given Satisfaction to *Madam D.* for she remarks with an infinite Subtilty (p. 425.) "That there is couch'd here a bitter Satire against *Hercules*. " *Minerva*, says she, to shew that this Hero was not capable of relieving himself out of so many Dangers without her Assistance, makes him demand Relief with Tears, which is unworthy of a Hero, who ought never to weep when in Danger." After which *Madam D.* proves, by a Passage out of *Sophocles*, that *Hercules* was incapable of this Weakness: Why then does she thus aggravate the Impertinence of *Minerva*? 'Tis to justify what she said a Page above, (2. 424.) "That the Discourse of this Goddess against *Jupiter* proves what Passion can do against even Wisdom itself." What! can Passion prevail over Divine Wisdom? And when it acts only with human Wisdom, what is the Office or Excellence of this Virtue, but the over-ruling the Passions?

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sions? "What is Wisdom, says Mr. B. "but an Equality of Soul that nothing "can disturb?" It is said in *Telemachus*, "That 'tis not possible for Passion to "displace Wisdom." And indeed this Maxim is so obvious and natural, that if we search narrowly, we shall even find it in some Part or other of Madam D.'s own *Remarks*; and in Effect I met with it upon opening the first Volume, (p. 407.) "In the Goddess of Prudence, Wisdom shou'd over-rule Passion." She shou'd still moderate, and keep the last in absolute Subjection. On this Occasion we must desire Madam D. that she wou'd no longer excuse the Gods, nor even the Heroes of *Homer*, the Inequality of their Characters, occasioned by their Passions; since in good Poetry, Passion is still subordinate to the Character: It ought never to appear in a Person but upon such signal Occasions, that the Reader may immediately perceive not only the Probability, but even the Necessity of this Exception. So that Passion should only corroborate and strengthen the Character, instead of destroying it. If we give Passions to Wisdom, which ought never to be done but with great Skill and Art, they ought to animate it the more to Justice, and



upon HOMER's Iliad. 113

and give it, according to the Nature of the Difficulty and Obstacle it has to encounter, either Strength or Patience. But who can ever imagine they can so far agree, as to make Wisdom become Madness, when *Horace*, speaking of a poetical Person, says, he should be the same from first to last, and not be inconsistent with himself?

———*Servetur ad imum,  
Qualis ab incepto processerit & sibi constet.*

Does he pretend that this Precept of his was just and proper only in a calm and peaceable Situation of Affairs, but that the very first Opposition should give him a sufficient Ground or Reason for violating it? This Exception would entirely destroy the Rule; for if a Person remains what he is, no longer than while an agreeable or disagreeable Object presents itself before him, there will be no Variety of Characters, but all Men will be alike; the most passionate and violent, as moderate as the mildest in all indifferent Occasions. On the other Hand, if every Thing is admitted in Passion, and it may be allow'd to authorize and justify all, in all Sorts of poetical Persons; then the Passions them-

I selves

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sions? "What is Wisdom, says Mr. B. "but an Equality of Soul that nothing "can disturb?" It is said in *Telemachus*, "That 'tis not possible for Passion to "displace Wisdom." And indeed this Maxim is so obvious and natural, that if we search narrowly, we shall even find it in some Part or other of Madam D.'s own *Remarks*; and in Effect I met with it upon opening the first Volume, (p. 407.) "In the Goddess of Prudence, Wisdom shou'd over-rule Passion." She shou'd still moderate, and keep the last in absolute Subjection. On this Occasion we must desire Madam D. that she wou'd no longer excuse the Gods, nor even the Heroes of *Homer*, the Inequality of their Characters, occasioned by their Passions; since in good Poetry, Passion is still subordinate to the Character: It ought never to appear in a Person but upon such signal Occasions, that the Reader may immediately perceive not only the Probability, but even the Necessity of this Exception. So that Passion should only corroborate and strengthen the Character, instead of destroying it. If we give Passions to Wisdom, which ought never to be done but with great Skill and Art, they ought to animate it the more to Justice, and

upon HOMER's Iliad. 113

and give it, according to the Nature of the Difficulty and Obstacle it has to encounter, either Strength or Patience. But who can ever imagine they can so far agree, as to make Wisdom become Madness, when *Horace*, speaking of a poetical Person, says, he should be the same from first to last, and not be inconsistent with himself?

———*Servetur ad imum,*

*Qualis ab incepto processerit & sibi constet.*

Does he pretend that this Precept of his was just and proper only in a calm and peaceable Situation of Affairs, but that the very first Opposition should give him a sufficient Ground or Reason for violating it? This Exception would entirely destroy the Rule; for if a Person remains what he is, no longer than while an agreeable or disagreeable Object presents itself before him, there will be no Variety of Characters, but all Men will be alike; the most passionate and violent, as moderate as the mildest in all indifferent Occasions. On the other Hand, if every Thing is admitted in Passion, and it may be allow'd to authorize and justify all, in all Sorts of poetical Persons; then the Passions them-

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selves will receive no Difference from  
 the Character of the Persons ; and this  
 is what exactly happens in *Homer* : He  
 only paints according to the Humour  
 he finds himself in, whether bold, ti-  
 morous, or angry ; and then applies it  
 all in the same Manner to the first Per-  
 son that occurs to his Thought or Im-  
 agination ; following herein rather those  
 transient and extravagant Passions he  
 then found in himself, than in the least  
 applying himself to Characters which  
 require Equality, Propriety, and Unifor-  
 mity. We have elsewhere taken a View  
 of his Heroes ; let us now consider his  
 Deities, particularly *Minerva* and *Mars*.  
*Minerva* in the *Iliad* is in Effect oppos'd  
 to *Mars*, not as Wisdom is oppos'd to  
 Madness or Folly, according to Madam  
 D.'s Interpretation, repeated in several  
 Places, (3. 512. 537. & al) but only  
 as one Madness or Folly is oppos'd to  
 another. *Juno*, speaking of *Mars* to *Ju-*  
*piter*, (L. 5. p. 225.) says to him, " Fa-  
 " ther of the immortal Gods, are not  
 " you enraged at the Ruins and Deva-  
 " stations made by the God of War,  
 " and the great Number of *Grecians* sa-  
 " crificed to his Rage, without any Rea-  
 " son, and against all Justice ? This Fu-  
 " ry, this Madman, knows no other  
 " Right

upon HOMER'S Iliad. 115

“ Right but Force.” But in the same  
B. (p. 233.) *Mars* thinks he has Reason  
to come to *Jupiter*, and tell him, “ Great  
“ *Jupiter*, 'tis you are the only Cause  
“ of all these our Debates ; for you  
“ have sent into the World a mad and  
“ vicious Daughter, who knows neither  
“ Rule nor Justice : Every other God  
“ obeys you, and we all submit to your  
“ Power ; 'tis she alone you caress and  
“ indulge ; you neither restrain her by  
“ Threatnings nor Chastisements, but  
“ let her go on, and commit all man-  
“ ner of Outrages unpunished, because  
“ she is your own immediate Off-spring,  
“ and received her Birth from you.”

’Tis true, Madam *D.* thinks to weaken  
this Testimony of *Mars*, by alledging,  
(i. 484.) “ That the most outrageous,  
“ unjust, and violent Persons, often ac-  
“ cuse even the best and most innocent  
“ of Violence and Injustice : *Mars*,  
“ whom even his own Mother calls a  
“ Fury and a Madman, who knows no  
“ other Right but Force, accuses *Miner-  
“ va* here of the self-same Crimes, and  
“ as knowing neither Law nor Justice :  
“ And this Character is very well pur-  
“ su’d and sustain’d ; for what is Folly  
“ or Madness ? Nothing else but a  
“ crooked and perverted Rule, which

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“ judges every Thing by Contraries,  
 “ and wou'd render what is streight  
 “ crooked.” But, in the first Place,  
 those that are Wicked never accuse the  
 Good, at least in a wise and rational  
 Poem, but for some apparent Reason.  
 When *Narcissus* in *Britannicus* wou'd as-  
 perse *Burrhus*, he does not say as *Bur-*  
*rhus* says of him,

— *Nommez moy le perfide,*  
*Qui vous ose donner ce conseil Parricide;*

but uses quite another Turn and Man-  
 ner of Expression,

*Burrhus ne pense pas Seigneur, tout ce*  
*qu'il dit,*  
*Son adroite vertu ménage son crédit.*

If *Minerva* had always endeavour'd  
 or taken Pains to counsel and advise  
 the People, by Proposals fit to be ad-  
 mitted by one Side or other; or if even  
 she had only employ'd the Way of Arms  
 upon just and honourable Motives, and  
 in a Manner suitable to her sacred Cha-  
 racter; *Mars* then durst not to have  
 told her, that she knew neither Law nor  
 Justice, but would have endeavour'd to  
 find another Head of Accusation. In  
 the



upon HOMER's Iliad. 117

the second Place, Madam D. her self justifies *Mars*, by the following Remark, and shews us, that 'tis with Reason he complains of *Jupiter's* Conduct, with relation to *Minerva*. "*Mars*,  
" says she, (484.) treats *Minerva* here  
" as a Child of *Jupiter*, if I may so  
" say: Under these Fables of the Gods,  
" adds she, *Homer* paints what we may  
" commonly observe in Mankind, i. e.  
" when Divisions or Contests arise in  
" Families, it commonly proceeds from  
" blind Partiality in Parents to their  
" Children, when they give the Preference to one Child more than another." So that, in short, the Allegory of *Minerva*, or Divine Wisdom, is by Madam D. changed all of a sudden into that of *Minerva*, a weak Child or Fondling, spoil'd by Indulgence. Lastly, Madam D. couldn't but remember, and reflect upon the Likeness there is between *Mars* and *Minerva*, since on a Passage of the 15th Book she observes, (2. 599.) " That *Jupiter* had not the  
" Power to command his own Children, since *Mars* and *Minerva* so often contradict and disobey his Orders."

'Tis this Disobedience in particular which destroys the Allegory of *Minerva*,

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consider'd as the Wisdom of *Jupiter*; for, lastly, I shou'd not be at all surprized if this God, who is himself in the *Iliad* represented as so wicked and unjust, had for his Wisdom a Goddess of the very same Character: But what I am astonish'd at, is, that they are always at Odds and Variance. She herself says, but a little before, "*Jupiter* is wanting in Gratitude and Affection for me; he really hates me." And indeed, as *Jupiter* favours and espouses the Cause and Interest of the *Trojans*, in order to revenge *Achilles*; and *Minerva*, on the contrary, still favours the *Greeks*; they must consequently have almost every Moment perpetual Jars upon this Head. In B. 4. (p. 129.) *Jupiter* rallies her upon *Paris* escaping from *Menelaus*, at which she is extremely piqu'd and provok'd. (P. 130.) in B. 8. (p. 64.) *Jupiter* says, "You did well to retire, otherwise this Thunder shou'd have reveng'd me upon your Insolence." I must confess, in that and another Place of this same B. *Jupiter* seems to make an Exception in Favour of *Minerva*. In a sort of Council held by the Gods in the Beginning of this Book, *Jupiter* (p. 34.) says to 'em all in so many Words, "Whoever  
" of

upon HOMER's Iliad. 119

“ of you descends to the Assistance of  
“ either the *Greeks* or *Trojans*, he'll in-  
“ cur my Displeasure and Indignation;  
“ neither shall he return to *Olympus*, till  
“ he acts more like a God ; or rather,  
“ I will cast him headlong down into  
“ the profound Abyss of dark *Tartarus*,  
“ into those horrid dismal subterraneous  
“ Caverns of Brass and Iron, that lie as  
“ far below the Regions of departed  
“ Souls, as the Heavens are above the  
“ Earth ; and he shall know by this  
“ his Punishment, how far my Power  
“ exceeds that of all the other Gods.  
“ *Minerva* answers to this, That she re-  
“ served to her self at least the Liberty  
“ of giving wholesome Counsel to the  
“ *Greeks*, that so they may not all pe-  
“ rish.” *Jupiter* hereupon smiling, with  
a gracious Countenance tells her, (p. 36.)  
“ Be assur'd, my Child, that what I  
“ have now declar'd does not concern  
“ you ; I shall always preserve the Ten-  
“ derness and Affection of a Father for  
“ you.” One wou'd think that by these  
Expressions, *Jupiter* permits *Minerva* in  
particular to assist the *Greek*, at least  
she gives her self leave in the same B.  
(p. 59 and 60.) and there joining with  
*Juno*, she's preparing to mix her self a-  
mong them : “ When *Jupiter*, perceiving



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“ ’em from the Top of Mount *Ida*, is  
 “ extremely angry, says the Poet, (*p.*  
 “ 60.) and immediately hereupon dis-  
 “ patching the Messenger of the immor-  
 “ tal Powers, the swift *Iris*, with her  
 “ Golden Wings; Go quickly, says he,  
 “ to these Goddesses, make ’em re-  
 “ turn immediately; but take Care they  
 “ don’t meet me, since they are not an e-  
 “ qual Match for me; for I declare to  
 “ ’em, and shall certainly be as good as  
 “ my Word, that I will wound their Hor-  
 “ ses, and throw them down headlong in  
 “ their Chariot; which I will break to  
 “ Pieces, so that the Space of ten Years  
 “ shan’t be able to repair the Mischief  
 “ and Injuries my Thunder shall inflict  
 “ where-ever it alights; and then my  
 “ Daughter shall know what it is to re-  
 “ sist a Father’s Will. As for *Juno*, I  
 “ am not so angry with her, it being her  
 “ usual Manner to oppose my Designs.”  
 Thus the Commands and Threatenings  
 in the preceding Discourse did not re-  
 gard *Minerva*, or the divine Wisdom,  
 she not being subject to Fate, says Ma-  
 dam *D.* (2. *p.* 414.) tho’ subject to Thun-  
 der. In the Commission *Iris* was about  
 to discharge herself of, to the two God-  
 desses, there is a Trifle to be remark’d,  
*viz.* That after having repeated Word  
 for

upon HOMER's Iliad. 121

for Word *Jupiter's* Discourse, *Iris*, who is one of the meanest and most inferiour of the Goddesses, and their Messenger by Profession, addresses herself solely to *Minerva*; and speaking to one of the superiour Deities, the immediate Offspring of *Jupiter*, and his divine Wisdom, she calls her in plain Terms, wicked Jade, and impudent Bitch, αἰνόιατη, κύον ἀδδεές, noble and harmonious Expressions, which Madam D. has not translated, fearing they might, in the *French* Language, lose something of their original Force and Beauty.

With reference to *Apollo*, before we examine the Justness of his Allegory, by which we are told we ought to understand the Decrees of God and Fate, the Reader will excuse, if he pleases, a short Digression upon the Doctrine of *Homer* and Madam D. on this Subject: I don't think this can be omitted here; but the Readers who don't relish that sort of Enquiries, may proceed to the following Articles. *Homer's* Ideas, which are very perplex'd and confus'd upon all Subjects, are still much more so upon this. It is impossible, on the one Hand, he shou'd not acknowledge the Priority of Fate to his *Jupiter*, since there was a Time when he had no Being; and even after

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after his Birth, before he became the Sovereign of Heaven, which according to the Testimony of *Neptune* (B. 15. p. 357.) fell to him by Lot. On the other Hand, it appears by some Passages in the *Iliad*, that *Jupiter* is Master and sovereign Arbitrator of the Decrees of Fate, tho' he did not make them. He says himself, in the 16th B. (p. 28.) What Affliction and Grief is it to me, to see that cruel Fate has condemn'd *Sarpedon*, the dearest and most belov'd of all my Children? Whereupon *Juno* answers him: What, will you snatch from the Jaws of Death, a Mortal whom Fate has condemn'd? You may please your self herein, but the other Gods will never approve of it. *Minerva*, in the 22d B. (p. 262.) tells him exactly the same Thing, and in the very same Words, with Reference to *Hector*. Lastly, We find other Passages, where the Poet himself speaks, and makes *Jupiter* the sole Author of the Fate of Men: "The Goddess, Mother to *Achilles*, says he, (B. 17. p. 83.) took Care to inform him of his Fate, by discovering to him the Decrees of great *Jupiter*." Madam D. deduces *Homer's* Doctrine of Fate only from Passages of this last Sort, omitting the other. *Jupiter*, says she, (3. 432.) is the Author and Master of Fate,



upon HOMER's Iliad. 123

Fate, and *Apollo* executes his Orders: The Decrees of *Jupiter*, adds she, constitute the Fate of Men.

This being laid down, Madam D. taking for her Master and Guide, upon so difficult and obtruse a Subject, a Poet from whom she herself owns, (*Pref. p. 48.*) "We can't deduce any regular System of Theology, says, that he e-  
"very where establishes humane Liberty  
"and a double Fate so necessary to re-  
"concile this Liberty with Predestina-  
"tion." And then recalling this Idea, or rather those very Words, in (*Vol II. p. 458.*) she says, "We see all along in  
"Homer, that he knew this double Fate  
"of Men, which is so necessary to re-  
"concile Free will with Predestination;  
"of which here follows a very clear and  
"and expresse Testimony. There are  
"two Roads for all Men; if they take  
"this, such a Thing will happen to them;  
"if they take That, their Lot and For-  
"tune will be different."

But 1st. If the Question is concerning the Christian Doctrine on this Subject, the Word Fate is then forbidden. If by the Fate, which disposes of Kingdoms, they understand the Will, or Almighty Power, of God; we may retain the Opinion, says St. *Augustin*, but we must cor-  
rect

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rect the Expression: *Quæ regna, si propterea quisquam fato tribuit, quia ipsam dei voluntatem, vel potestatem fati nomine appellat, sententiam teneat, linguam corrigat.* De Civ. 5. 1. But 2dly, Upon what Grounds does Madam D. affirm, that a double Fate, or a double Decree of God, is necessary to preserve humane Liberty? This Proposition won't be allow'd by the famous School, which maintains that God is the first Mover in all the Actions of Free Creatures, as well as those of Necessary Agents, but making both the one and the other still conformable to their different Natures; his Decree, which is ever Simple, is, that the first acts freely what he makes them do, and the other act necessarily.\* Neither will this double Decree be allow'd Madam D. in the other System, which is explain'd in so clear and distinct a Manner, by F. Daniel the Jesuit\*; for tho' in this System, God, in order to form his Decrees concerning all the Circumstances and Events, in which a rational Creature can possibly be placed, directs himself by the Know-

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\* *Vide Sylviu in Th. p. 1. 9. 22. Provid. Dei Art. 4. & alios.*

\* *In a Treatise concerning the Efficacy of Grace.*

*upon* HOMER'S *Iliad*. 125

ledge he hath of conditional future Contingents, and particularly of all the Tempers and Dispositions of Mind, of which that Creature is capable; yet his Decrees themselves only concern such as are absolutely future; because, of the infinite Number of possible Things which God sees, he effectually wills only those he intends shall actually exist; and of all the Motives and Inclinations that can determine a free Creature to obey the fix'd Orders of his Providence, he always inspires them with those only to which he knows they will certainly incline. On the contrary, if Madam *D.* understands by Fate the different Ways that lie open to Men; in a Word, all conditional or possible Futurities; then in this Sense a double Fate or Decree is not sufficient, but we must admit an Infinity; since instead of the particular Choice a Man makes in every Circumstance, he may make an infinite Number of others. But what most surprizes me here, is, that Madam *D.* who don't embrace a false System of Fate, but preserves humane Liberty, shou'd make use in another Place of a strong Expression against this very Liberty. *Homer* (B. 22. p. 250.) relates, "That *Hector* was the only Person, who, chain'd and bound



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“ bound by his bad Fate and Genius,  
 “ did not enter the City again with the  
 “ other Generals, but remain’d before  
 “ the Gates.” Hereupon Madam D.  
 makes this Remark, (3.544.) “ He ex-  
 “ presses it very well by the Term  
 “ Bound or Chain’d; for Fate imposes  
 “ Shackles and Chains upon Men, which  
 “ prevent and hinder their escaping their  
 “ destin’d Lot and Fortune.” But she’ll  
 allow me to tell her, that tho’ Death  
 commonly comes upon Men independ-  
 dantly of their Choice, yet if Men do  
 any Action that leads thereto, as *Hector*  
 does upon this Occasion, the Decree of  
 God relating to their Death don’t hin-  
 der but that those Actions were done  
 with a perfect and entire Liberty; and  
 it will never be allow’d to say of them,  
 that Fate or the Decree of God binds  
 or suspends the Liberty of Men, and  
 puts Shackles and Chains upon them,  
 which prevents their escaping their de-  
 stin’d Lot. This short Illustration shews  
 that the Liberty of Men, as all other  
 Truths, is much better maintain’d upon  
 true than false Principles.

The Infallibility of God’s Decrees,  
 which is laid down as a certain Princi-  
 ple in all Catholick Schools, is opposite  
 to another Error of *Homer* and Madam  
 D. who

upon HOMER's Iliad. 127

D. who think the Decrees of God may be chang'd, "*Homer* then knew this  
" Truth, says Madam D (3. 422.) that  
" God is the Master of Fate, and that  
" he may change it as he pleases : And  
" again, (3. 552.) *Homer* lays it down  
" here as a certain Truth, That *Jupiter*  
" is the absolute Master of Fate, and  
" that he can change it, and remove or  
" alter the Time and Hour he has ap-  
" pointed." And least we shou'd think  
that Fate here stood only for a general  
and indefinite Term, that did not ex-  
pressly signify the Will and Decrees  
of God, Madam D. takes Care in an-  
other Place to illustrate her Thought,  
and confirm her Proposition, in the 3d  
*Vol.* (p. 445, 446.) where she makes  
this fine Remark ; " What *Homer* says  
" here of the Orders of *Jupiter*, that may  
" be forc'd and alter'd, ought to be ex-  
" plain'd by the double Decree and  
" Fate that *Homer* own'd, and of which  
" I have before spoke ; and there is  
" nothing herein but what is agreeable  
" to sound Divinity, which teaches us  
" that God sometimes revokes his own  
" Decrees ; witness King *Ezekiah*, to  
" whom the Prophet *Isaiah* pronounces  
" Death : Put your House in order,  
" says he to him, for you shall surely  
" die.

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“ *die.* This pious King, by his Pray-  
 “ ers and Tears, causes the Sen-  
 “ tence of Death to be chang’d, and  
 “ obtains a further Grant of fifteen  
 “ Years of Life, (20th Chapter of the  
 “ 2d Book of *Kings*) Here then we  
 “ find the Decrees of God chang’d; for  
 “ God, who is Master of them, re-  
 “ vokes them.” Madam *D.* who some-  
 times cites *Grotius*, might have seen that  
 this Commentator, agreeably to sound  
 Divinity, explains this Sentence of  
 Death only of the natural Disposition  
 in which the sick Person was, who  
 cou’dn’t be heal’d but by a particular  
 Will of God, or Miracle; for God  
 changes and suspends when he pleases  
 the general Laws of Nature, according  
 to which *Ezekiah* must have died.  
 Therefore the Denunciation which the  
 Prophet makes to the sick Prince, only  
 imports what ought to have happen’d  
 in the ordinary Course of second Causes;  
 and the Promise he afterwards makes of  
 fifteen Years of longer Life, expresses  
 the Decree of God, which was to grant  
 this fifteen Years to *Ezekiah*, in Conse-  
 quence of his Prayers and Tears, which  
 he foresaw or preordain’d. ’Tis by  
 much the same Principles that Divines  
 intrepret all the Passages of Scripture,  
 that



upon HOMER's Iliad. 129

that have any Resemblance or Affinity to this, because they know that the immutable Will of God is a Principle of Faith. *Responsio D. Th. ad fidem pertinens est, voluntatem Dei esse immutabilem (Sylv. in Th. p. 1. Qu. 19. Art. 7.)*

Madam D. don't rectify her Opinion of the Decrees of God being forc'd or alter'd, by saying that God, who is Master of them, revokes them; for first, there is a palpable Contradiction between the Decrees of God being forc'd, and God being Master of his Decrees; the Decrees of God being forc'd is a very false and vicious Expression, to say nothing worse: That God being Master of his Decrees, is also an improper Expression; for tho' he is Master so far as they flow freely and voluntarily from him, yet this Term implies an Idea of Change and Variation, that is inconsistent with his divine Perfections: But we say very properly, that he is absolutely Master and Governour of the World, and all the Changes that happen therein; because it is God, who by the immutable Decrees, of which he is the Author, has regulated and appointed all those Mutations and Changes.

Further, Madam D. seems not fix'd in her Opinion, that it is God himself who

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revokes

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revokes his Decrees : There are several Passages in her *Remarks*, where she seems to think those Decrees may be forc'd by Men. Notwithstanding what she says, *Vol. 2. p. 413.* " That the Decrees of Fate, which never yield to Force, yet sometimes do to Mildness and Goodness." Which is false: I find, *Vol. 3. p. 431.* " That bold and brave Men force Fate to change, and declare in their Favour;" which is yet more false. M. D. has found the Way to contradict herself twice, without speaking Truth in either of the Times. *Lastly*, In *Homer* himself, *Apollo*, who represents Fate, (2. 392.) who is the same as Fate, (3. 542.) and whom therefore we ought to believe in what he says, speaks thus to *Aeneas* (*B. 17. p. 78.*) " *Aeneas* says he, How will you save your City against the Decrees of *Jupiter* himself? As I have seen upon former Occasions, Men, who, confiding in their Strength and Courage, and the Number of their Troops incapable of Fear, have forc'd even the Fates themselves. Oh! you'll lose proud *Ilium*, in spite of the Decrees of Heaven; for doubt not *Jupiter* wou'd much rather give you the Victory than the *Greeks*: But you withdraw and de-

" prive

upon HOMER's Iliad. 131

“prive your selves of his good Will by  
“your Flight.” Madam D. who lays so  
great Strefs upon *Jupiter*, as the sove-  
reign Master and Disposer of his De-  
crees, falls here into a quite different  
sort of Admiration; and says, upon Oc-  
casion of this Discourse of *Apollo*, “Here  
“is one of the most beautiful and  
“strongest Passages in all *Homer*, and  
“one of those that has suffer'd most  
“in our Translations; yet it is not ob-  
“scure, and *Apollo* speaks there with a  
“Clearness and Eloquence worthy of such  
“a Deity. What can be imagin'd more  
“strong, or more capable to animate  
“Troops, than to tell them I have seen  
“Armies obtain Victory by their Va-  
“lour and Courage, even against the  
“Decrees of Fate; and you, to whom  
“Fate is favourable, and for whom *Ju-*  
“*piter* himself fights, you lose by your  
“Cowardice all those Advantages. I  
“don't think that an humane Mind can  
“soar higher; and this is one of those  
“sublime Passages which *Demosthenes*  
“studied in *Homer*, and knew so well  
“to imitate (3. 445.)”. After this *Ho-*  
*mer* has no longer Right to tell us ex-  
pressly, for which Madam D. commends  
him, (*Vol* 3. *p.* 527.) “That it is not  
“their Valour that saves Men, and



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“ that ’tis God alone that gives Victory  
 “ as pleases him; since *Apollo* here as-  
 “ sures us, that there are Armies, who,  
 “ solely confiding in the Courage and  
 “ Number of their Troops, have forc’d  
 “ the Decrees of *Jupiter*, and even gain’d  
 “ the Victory in spite of him.” And  
 was it not very just to pronounce this  
 impious Speech the greatest Effort or  
 highest Flight of an humane Mind?

But to make all reasonable Allowances,  
 I’ll easily forgive the Expression that is  
 found in *Homer*, (*B. 17. p. 77, 78.*)  
 “ They are upon the Point of obtaining  
 “ by their Valour and Courage the  
 “ Glory of the Battle, even against the  
 “ Decrees of *Jupiter* himself, if in this  
 “ Moment, &c.” Provided the thing  
 don’t happen, as indeed here it don’t,  
 this manner of Speaking may shew us  
 that Men very often may seem upon the  
 Point of accomplishing what yet they  
 never can actually perform or execute  
 against the Decrees of Heaven. I wou’d  
 not even condemn the Word *Fate*, us’d  
 only as a Poetical Term, with this Re-  
 striction, that if by *Fate* is meant the  
 Decrees of God, then its Sentences and  
 Determinations ought to be irrevokable;  
 as in this Sense we find it often occurs,  
 even in the *Pagan* Poets themselves. If

on

upon HOMER'S Iliad. 133

on the contrary, it only signifies the Series of natural Events, consider'd rather as the Effects of the ordinary Course of second Causes, than Objects of the particular Will of God; then a Poet, in this Sense of the Word, may be allow'd to say, That a good or vertuous Man forces or conquers Fate: He forces it by making Things succeed, which another cou'd not bring about; he conquers it, by opposing Constancy and Patience, to Adversities and Dangers; but he does both in Consequence of the Decrees of God, who gives him the Power, and who can even make him triumph in an extraordinary and miraculous Manner over all the Obstacles and Oppositions he can meet with, either from visible or invisible Powers. Let us now proceed to the allegorical Explication of *Apollo*.

We have seen, according to Madam D, "That *Apollo* represents Fate:" I read in other Remarks, as in (*Vol. 2. p. 609.*)

"That *Minerva* being only the Wisdom and Understanding of *Jupiter*, 'tis she who always presides over the Counsels of his Providence; that consequently she's consider'd as bringing all Things to the fatal Period and Term which is allotted them." I find in the same Volume, (*p. 392.*) "That

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“ *Minerva*, i. e. the eternal Wisdom or  
 “ Providence, has dictated the Laws  
 “ that Fate is oblig’d to follow, and  
 “ obey.” A Reflection which Madam  
*D.* makes, upon Occasion of a Passage  
 in *B.* 7. p. 3. where *Minerva*, represent-  
 ing Providence, follows a Council which  
*Apollo* representing Fate, had dictated to  
 her. However it is, by a sort of Com-  
 bination I don’t understand, that *Miner-  
 va* in the *Iliad* protecting the *Greeks*, is  
 always opposite to *Apollo*, who protects  
 the *Trojans*: i. e. the Wisdom and Pro-  
 vidence of God is always opposite to  
 the Fate of Men, of which yet ’tis the  
 Author, in Madam *D.*’s System, 3. 432.

I find again, in the 21<sup>st</sup> *B.* (p. 237.)  
 that *Neptune*, who espous’d the Quarrel  
 of the *Greeks*, proposes a Duel to *Apollo*,  
 who favour’d the *Trojans*. *Apollo* refuses  
 it, telling him, “ *Neptune*, you might  
 “ think me very foolish, if I enter’d the  
 “ Lists with you upon the Account of  
 “ miserable Mortals.” An Answer that  
 condemns all the other Deities for Folly  
 who fought upon this very Account, in  
 the same *B.* 21. which indeed is only the  
 Triumph of Madness, Folly and Extrava-  
 gance. Madam *D.* observes hereupon (p.  
 538, 539.) “ That *Apollo* being the same  
 “ with Fate, and the Ruin of the *Trojans*  
 being



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“ing concluded and determin'd, this  
 “God can no longer delay it; and  
 “that therefore he ought not to fight  
 “*Neptune*.” But first, the Allegory is  
 spoil'd or maim'd, with Reference to  
*Neptune*, whose Theological Relation to  
*Apollo* she don't give us. Secondly,  
 tho' the Ruin of the *Trojans* was deter-  
 min'd, yet they will defend themselves  
 a long Time, nor is even their Town  
 taken within the whole Compass of the  
 Poem; and *Apollo* himself will yet a-  
 gain come to the Succour and Assistance  
 of *Hector*, in the following Book. Last-  
 ly, if *Apollo*, the Patron of the *Trojans*,  
 cou'd no longer defend them, this was  
 then an allegorical Reason to make him  
 be conquer'd by *Neptune*. 'Tis the same  
 in a Passage in *B. 5. (p. 202.)* where  
*Apollo* complains that *Diomedes* had at-  
 tack'd him; Madam *D.* hereupon makes  
 this Remark (*1. 464.*) from *Eustathius*,  
*viz.* “to desire us to reflect upon and  
 “admire the Decorum *Homer* observes  
 “here; he gives no Advantage to *Dio-*  
 “*medes* over *Apollo*, that he may'nt re-  
 “late incredible Things, and which e-  
 “ven Allegory itself could not justify:  
 “He wounds *Venus* and *Mars*; for 'tis  
 “possible, in the moral Sense and Mean-  
 “ing of this Fable, to conquer and sur-

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“ mount the unreasonable Passions re-  
 “ presented by those two Deities ; but  
 “ ’tis not possible to conquer *Apollo*,  
 “ whether we understand by him Fate  
 “ or the Sun.” And it is equally impos-  
 sible to conquer *Mars* and *Venus*, consider-  
 ed as Planets, yet they are here con-  
 quer’d by *Diomedes* ; for if we consider  
*Apollo* as the Fate of the *Trojans*, whose  
 Protector he is, it was very natural, al-  
 legorically speaking, for *Diomedes* to  
 conquer, or at least shake the Fate of  
 the *Trojans*, and prepare their Ruin.  
 Lastly, if the particular Fate of *Diome-  
 des* was meant here, as it would seem  
*Eustathius* and Madam D. believ’d, ’tis  
 only himself then who should have been  
 conquer’d by it ; and if it was not pro-  
 per, nor according to Decorum, that  
*Diomedes* should have the Advantage o-  
 ver *Apollo*, it was every way so that  
*Apollo* should have it over him. But  
 nothing is so pleasant as these allego-  
 rical Interpretations of *Eustathius* upon  
 Things, which *Homer* never dream’d nor  
 thought of. We shall produce else-  
 where yet more remarkable Examples ;  
 let us now proceed to the Moral Al-  
 legories.

SECT.

SECT. III.

*Of the Moral Allegories.*

WE have examin'd, in the preceding Section, the Manner in which *Homer* makes *Minerva* act, with Reference to *Jupiter*, and the other Deities; because in this View and Relation the Allegorist can only consider her, as representing Divine Wisdom. In the Design we have now in Hand, to examine her, as representing humane Wisdom, or the Virtue of Prudence, we shall follow her in the Intercourse and Communications she has with Men; not but that in some of these Communications, *Madam D.* still terms her divine Wisdom; but then in others of the same Kind, she terms her also humane Prudence. We shall here join both Senses together, to avoid perhaps a too nice, but certainly an useless Distinction.

The Counsels and Succours given to Men by *Minerva*, are mention'd episodically in the *Iliad*; both the one and the other shou'd only have been given in just Enterprizes, undertaken by the  
Command,



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Command, or with the Consent of the Gods, either tacit or express'd. Madam D. deduces this Principle from *Homer* himself; for in a Passage of B. 11. (p. 186.) "The Poet says, that *Diomedes* saw a Chariot, in which was "two of the most valiant Soldiers on "the Brink of the *Hellespont*, both "Sons of *Merops*, of the City of *Percep*, the most excellent Augur of his "Time, and who foreseeing the Misfortune with which he was threaten'd, "forbid his Sons to go to this fatal "War; but carried by their Fate, which "hurried them on to their Destruction, "they despise his Orders, and stole "from his House. *Diomedes* attacks "them, kills them, and takes their "Arms." Madam D. observes hereupon, (2. 508.) "That *Homer*, always diligent and industrious to instil the "Principles of Morality and good Life, "teaches us hereby, that Disobedience "of Children to the Orders and Commands of their Parents, is always "fatal: Yet in the same 11th B. (p. 210.) *Nestor* relates, that going to "fight the *Eleans*, his Father check'd his "Eagerness, and told him he was too "young, and too much a Novice in "the Art of War; and shut up his Chariot

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“riot and Horses: But all these Pre-  
“cautions, says *Nestor*, were in vain;  
“and I stole away, and came on Foot  
“in the midst of our Cavalry, for *Minerva*  
“*her* self animated and led me  
“on.” Here now *Minerva* is favouring  
Disobedience to Parents; we shall also  
see her favour Contempt of Religion,  
and Disobedience to the Commands of  
the Gods, and what is yet stranger, e-  
ven to her own Orders: To excite *Dio-*  
*medes* to fight, she proposes to him the  
Example of *Tydeus*, the Father of this  
Hero, and tells him in express Words,  
(B. 5. p. 129) “Tho’ I had forbid him  
“to fight against the *Thebans*, and to  
“insult them with that bold and fierce  
“Air that was so natural to him, and  
“commanded him to sit down at Ta-  
“ble with them, and only talk mildly  
“and peaceably to them; my Com-  
“mands and Prohibitions not being a-  
“ble to restrain within Bounds his un-  
“daunted Courage, he challeng’d those  
“proud Descendants of *Cadmus*, and  
“conquer’d them all without any Trou-  
“ble or Difficulty; for I lent him my  
“Assistance.” If one shou’d find in a  
Modern such a Contradiction in Morals  
and Reasoning, as this, ’twould be said  
he had not so much as reviewed his  
Verses;

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Verſes; and certainly *Homer* ſeems never to have reviewed his, in order to correct them. But let us proceed to what we find in the *Iliad* itſelf, and begin with the Hero: *Achilles*, according to *Horace*, is paſſionate and unreaſonable, brutiſh and fooliſh; and 'tis *Minerva* who protects and conducts him: It is very congruous and agreeable to *Homer's* Idea; for here's a vicious Man guided and govern'd by a more vicious Goddeſs: But what becomes of the Allegory which the Commentators wou'd have underſtood in the advantageous Senſe? "'Tis no Shame," ſays *Madam D.* (3. 513.) ſpeaking "of *Æneas*' flying before *Achilles*, to "fly before a Hero whom Wiſdom her "ſelf conducts." When one thinks that this Hero is *Achilles*, we are not much affected with the Maxim. Laſtly, when we only conſider *Minerva* as a warlike Deity, 'tis ſhameful for *Æneas* to fly before her; according to *Madam D.* (2. 512. 437.) *Ajax* and *Menelaus* appear'd great, becauſe they did'nt fly before *Apollo*, nor even *Jupiter* himſelf, till after engaging them.

But after all, what fort of Succours did *Minerva* give *Achilles*? She uſes the meaneſt and baſeſt Fraud to make *Hector* fall



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fall into the Hands of his Enemy, by perswading him, under the Form of *Deiphobus*, that she will assist him in the Fight. Such a Conduct is not worthy of the divine Wisdom, nor even of humane Prudence. Prudence sometimes takes Advantage of the Faults of Adversaries, and it even deceives them by feign'd and counterfeit Steps and Marches, of the Meaning and Interpretation of which it is always Master; but always avoids Falshood and Lying, and especially Treachery, under Pretence of Protection or Friendship. I refer to another Place, making Remarks upon the unjust Inequality which the Assistance of *Minerva* afterwards makes in the Fight between *Achilles* and *Hector*; but 'tis proper here to remark how *Minerva* supports *Diomedes* at the Games in the 23d B. " *Apollo* had taken *Diomedes*' Whip from him, and *Minerva* " perceiving this Trick of *Apollo*, (*these are the Words of the Translation, p. 311.*) " runs swiftly towards *Diomedes*, gives " him a Whip, and inspires his Horses " with new Strength and Vigour: Not " content with this Favour, she carries " her Indignation against *Eumelus* yet further; she joins him, breaks the Axle- " Tree of his Chariot, the Horses fly " off,

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“ off, the Chariot is overturn'd, and the  
 “ Son of *Admetus* falls under the Wheels,  
 “ and is wounded in his Face and Arms.”

Which of these two Frauds or Tricks,  
 that of *Apollo*, or that of *Minerva*, seems  
 the wisest? Madam D. says here, (*Vol.*  
 3. 579.) “ That *Homer* feigns that *Min-*  
 “ *erva* came to *Diomedes*' Assistance,  
 “ because this Hero had the Prudence  
 “ to provide himself with two Whips.”

A Particular indeed worthy of the Al-  
 legory of *Minerva*! But what Explica-  
 tion will they give to the broken Axle-  
 Tree? Does this Circumstance inform  
 us, that it is becoming the Prudence of a  
 Man who is to dispute with another the  
 Prize in a Race, to cause the Axle-Tree  
 of his Competitor to be secretly broke, as  
*Pelops* did to *Oenomaus*? Madam D. her  
 self tells us, that this Prudence cou'd  
 only have been look'd upon as a Trick  
 and Cheat; and that before he had re-  
 ceiv'd the Prize, he shou'd first have  
 purg'd himself by Oath of all Fraud  
 and Deceit. In short, she gives this Judg-  
 ment against the Games in the *Æneids*  
 compar'd with those of the *Iliad*, (3.  
 589.) “ That the Race of *Nisus* and *Cu-*  
 “ *rius* seem to me far inferior to  
 “ that of *Ajax* and *Ulysses*; and that  
 “ what *Nisus* did in Favour of his Friend,  
 “ was

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" was even an Injustice that deserv'd  
" Punishment." What must we then do  
with *Minerva*?

But the blackest Passage relating to  
*Minerva*, is, when she is sent by *Jupiter*  
at the Instigation of *Juno*, she goes  
and excites *Pandarus* in B. 4. to let fly  
an Arrow against *Menelaus*, which breaks  
the Alliance that had been sworn be-  
tween the *Greeks* and the *Trojans*: The  
only Action in the whole *Iliad*, where  
Wisdom shou'd have been best and most  
properly employ'd, was, on the contra-  
ry, to have made and concluded that  
Alliance, by Virtue of which *Helen*  
shou'd have been restor'd to her Hus-  
band, and a War so fatal to both Sides  
terminated and concluded. *Tasso* had  
an Idea resembling this of *Homer*, (*Cant.*  
*7. St. 99.*) but he supposes, according to  
his usual good Sense, that it was a De-  
vil, in the Shape of *Florinda*, that wou'd  
have excited *Oradin* to let fly an Ar-  
row at Count *Raymond*, which might  
break the Alliance they had before sti-  
pulated and swore to; for, as I have  
already observ'd, we can borrow no-  
thing from *Homer* without altering or  
changing it; and it is only to a mali-  
cious and seducing Fiend the Function  
and Office is proper, which is here so  
absurdly



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absurdly assign'd to the Goddess of Wisdom. Madam D. her self could not avoid giving *Minerva's* Sollicitations, with Reference to *Pandarus*, the Name of Temptation. *Homer*, says she, calls him foolish, (1. 412.) "Because he was  
 " about to commit an Action manifestly  
 " Unjust and Impious; and that if he  
 " had the least Sense, he wou'd have  
 " resisted all Temptations to it." But God, or the divine Wisdom, is incapable of tempting to Evil, nor does he ever tempt any Man, *Deus intentator malorum est, ipse autem neminem tentat.* Jac. 1. 13. Yet it is upon this very Temptation Madam D. proposes this Question to her self, (1. 409.) "Wherefore does  
 " *Homer* so order it, that even *Minerva*  
 " goes to excite *Pandarus* to so unjust  
 " an Action as what he's here about to  
 " commit, viz. The Violation of so sacred an Alliance by an Act of Hostility?" And instead of answering, as upon Occasion of the infamous Exchange and Traffick of Towns, *Jupiter* and *Juno* mutually deliver one another, that under the Persons of Deities, *Homer* represents wicked Princes, (1. 408.) or rather instead of remarking into what an Abyss of Impiety and Extravagance Paganism had sunk the Minds of Men, and par-

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particularly that of *Homer's*, Madam  
*D.* answers, (1. 409.) "That 'tis  
 "to make us understand that Wisdom  
 "always presides over all the Decrees  
 "of *Jupiter*, and conducts all the Springs  
 "of his Providence." Whereby we  
 immediately see, that she causes the  
 Decree of God to fall upon an Action  
 manifestly unjust and impious. Not con-  
 tent with this, she says further, (1. 413.)  
 "It may be ask'd here, why *Minerva*,  
 "who excites *Pandarus* against *Mene-*  
 "laus, yet causes *Pandarus'* Arrow to fly  
 "aside, and *Menelaus* to escape it? 'Tis to  
 "make us understand, that the same  
 "Providence, which, if I may so express  
 "it, drives the Wicked to do Evil,  
 "knows also how to save and deliver  
 "the Innocent out of their Hands."  
 'Tis most certain that God, who can't  
 will or approve any Crime, can't de-  
 cree it: But seeing in every Circum-  
 stance, what the Creature is capable  
 of, by its own Malice and Wickedness,  
 which he wisely permits; when he judg-  
 es it proper, he forms a Decree, to  
 draw Good from the Evil it commits by  
 its own Will, and sole and proper Fault:  
 \**Peccata mala sunt, ideoque a Deo provideri*  
*non possunt, prævidet tamen, & prævisa or-*  
 L dinat

\* *Estius in 1 Sent. dist. 39 par. 9.*

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*dinat ad bonum.* But Madam D. is the only Person, who dares speak thus: "Providence pushes the Wicked on to act Evil." She has, perhaps, heard it said, that, according to some Divines whose Opinions I can't follow, God pre-determines free Causes to that which is physical or material in bad Actions. But even, according to those Divines, he never pre-determines nor pushes them on to what is bad or immoral in those Actions, that can give them the Name of Evil. Lastly, Supposing it true, as it is certainly false, that Providence pushes on bad Men to act Evil; is this a Doctrine or Morality suitable to a Poem, or Commentary upon a Poem? Madam D. says, in one Place of her B. (1. 519.) "I am afraid that many, in reading this Work, and finding it far above my Strength, will be apt to refer me back to my Spindle and Distaff." She has certainly done *Homer* greater Honour than he deserv'd: But she might have much better shewn her Modesty, in abstaining from touching upon Subjects which are even difficult in Theology, to which they peculiarly belong, and which can't be treated incidentally or occasionally, nor in fanciful Remarks wrote upon a Pagan Poet, who had neither any System in his Mind,

nor



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nor Clearness or Exactness in his Discourses and Reasonings.

But to leave Theology : Madam D. has made me here mention, against my Inclination, what Difference there is between *Homer's Minerva*, and that which instructs and guides the modern *Telemachus*. And notwithstanding that Neglect, or Oblivion of Allegories, with which F. B. reproaches us ; In which of the two Poems, in the Allegory of *Minerva*, either consider'd as divine Wisdom or humane Prudence, is the Character better represented, supported and sustain'd throughout ? To judge of the two poetical Persons, we need only apply a very sensible Criterion and Rule that *Montaigne* proposes to judge of two historical Persons ; viz. by placing the one in the Room of the other ; and then consulting the Manner how each of 'em, when thus exchang'd, wou'd have fill'd the other's Place. 'Tis by this Rule he judges *Socrates* a greater Person than *Alexander* ; because the Philosopher cou'd have much better sustain'd and discharged the Station and Character of the Prince, than the Prince that of the Philosopher. What Honour wou'd be done the *Iliad*, if we cou'd transfer thither the Counsels and Examples of Wisdom,

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Goodness, and even Valour itself, which *Minerva*, in *Telemachus*, exhibits there? On the contrary, imagine that after all she had said and done, to inspire the young Prince with so just and happy a Conduct, equally beneficial and advantageous to himself as to his Subjects, she had inserted a seditious Complaint and Accusation against *Jupiter*, or some black Instigation for breaking the Alliance they had sworn to, as in the 8th and 4th B. of the *Iliad*; is there any Reader who wou'dnt look upon such sort of Passages, as inserted on Purpose by some invdious Person, to cast a Reproach upon the Poem of *Telemachus*? Whence comes it then, that in *Homer* they don't shock or offend his Friends and Admirers? 'Tis because these Extravagancies and Impieties are plac'd in the *Iliad*, as in their true Element and Centre; and that, to make use of an Expression of Madam D. all there, is of the same Make and Contexture. What Difference also is there between the Respect *Minerva* gains herself in *Telemachus*, from the unworthy Manner she's treated in the *Iliad*? Is there any Thing so noble, as the Perplexity and Confusion of *Calypso* upon the Sight of *Mentor*, under whose Name and Appearance

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ance *Minerva* conceal'd her self? "Ca-  
" *lypso*, tho' her self a Goddess, is trou-  
" bled and perplex'd upon the Sight of  
" this seemingly simple and obscure  
" Man, who appears only a Person  
" of inferior or middle Rank and Con-  
" dition, and who yet, says she, being  
" viewed nearer, shew'd something in  
" him divine, and beyond a mortal  
" State and Condition." Can any  
Thing be more sublime, or more pro-  
per to possess the inmost Recesses of the  
Mind with a certain Awe and Venera-  
tion, with which we are charm'd, than  
the Inspiration of the Priest of *Jupiter*  
in the Temple of *Salentum*; who, having  
before him *Mentor* and *Telemachus*, thus  
speaks to him in abrupt Words and Sen-  
tences: "O *Telemachus*! thy Labours  
" surpass those of thy Father; the fierce  
" Enemy groans in the Dust under the  
" Weight of thy Sword; the Gates of  
" Brass, and the inaccessible Ramparts  
" fall at thy Feet. Oh, great Goddess!  
" how his Father — Oh, young Man!  
" you will at last see — At this  
" Sentence, the Words die in his  
" Mouth, and he remains, as it were  
" by Force, in Silence, full of Asto-  
" nishment: All the People are struck  
" with Fear; *Idomeneus* trembling, *Te-*



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“*Iemachus* surpriz’d, *Mentor* is the only one whom the Divine Spirit did not shock nor astonish.” Indeed when one has once tasted such sort of Images, we can no longer suffer those of *Jupiter*, ready to revenge himself with Thunder and Lightning upon the Insolence of *Minerva*, that wicked and impudent Bitch.

A Fact we ought not to dissemble, whether it diminish or increase the Blame due to *Homer* on this Occasion, is, that it does not appear throughout the *Iliad*, that he ever had the least Intention to make *Minerva* be look’d upon as the Wisdom of *Jupiter*, or even so much as to have her pass for a wise Goddess. *Homer* undoubtedly was very capable to represent *Minerva* in the Person of Wisdom, and yet under this Character make her take an infinite Number of false Steps: But the Truth is, that he never once thought to give it her; and indeed *Homer*, who is very liberal of his honorary Epithets, who terms *Priam* equal in Wisdom to the Gods themselves, when he refuses in *B. 7. p. 24.* to save his City, by restoring *Helen* to the *Greeks*, the same *Homer* never so much as once dream’d of giving the Epithet of Wise to *Minerva*;

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*nerua*; neither is she so call'd, save only in Madam D.'s Remarks: But he did'nt forget to call her λαοσσόος, *populorum concitatrix*, \* one who put the People in Commotion, and set them together by the Ears; an Epithet he gives the God *Mars*, † and the Goddess *Discord*; ‡ and, according to the Taste that *Homer* had for Confusion and Slaughter, he thought hereby far more to raise the Character of *Minerva*, than if he had endow'd her with all the Vertues.

The Battles of *Diomedes* against *Venus*, and against *Mars*, enter also, by Madam D.'s System, into the Number of moral Allegories. "*Diomedes*, says she, (1. 464.) wounds *Venus* and *Mars*, because 'tis possible to subdue unreasonable Passions represented by those two Divinities." *Venus* undoubt- edly signifies carnal Pleasure; *Mars* represents Folly in general, and more particularly those Injustices and Violences whence Wars and Battles arise:" 'Tis still Madam D. who speaks, (3. 537.) With Reference to *Mars*, I say, first, that 'tis to do him an Injury to believe him more wicked than any other Deities of the *Iliad*. 'Tis

\* 128.

† 398.

‡ 48.

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only among the Commentators upon *Homer*, that we find those specious Distinctions of benevolent or malicious Deities, good and bad Spirits and Geniuses; in him, from *Jupiter* to the infernal Furies, they breathe all nothing but Folly and perfect Injustice. We have prov'd this elsewhere with respect to *Jupiter*, and we have now done it as to *Minerva*. In the second Place, 'tis *Diomedes* here that is made the Actor against *Mars*; I don't see in him the Character of a Man so contrary and opposite to the Confusions and Disorders of War, since, on the contrary, he is only the most terrible and inexorable Warrior in the whole *Iliad*. Thirdly, what moral Honour do *Diomedes*' Actions and Engagements against *Mars* do him; since he therein contends with *Apollo*, and even *Jupiter* himself, whom he opposes and resists in B. 8. with a Boldness, on which Madam D. makes great Encomiums; which shall be examin'd in their Place. And indeed, it appears that *Homer* intended to represent, in the Character of *Diomedes*, only a passionate, furious Man, another *Capaneus*, who neither fears Gods nor Men, and who thereby drew down upon himself the Vengeance of Heaven, with  
which



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which he is very plainly threaten'd. 'Tis these Threatnings especially, and their Execution happening afterwards, in *Homer's* System, that entirely ruins the whole Allegory of the Pursuit and Attack of Vice, over which the Victory in a moral Poet should always be attended with a sure and ample Recompence. Yea, further, all the Discourses we meet with in the *Iliad* upon Occasion of the Battles of *Diomedes* with *Mars* and *Venus*, tend to condemn his Actions; and *Homer* seems far from censuring or condemning so many Injustices and Violences as are committed in his Poem, so clearly, as he appears to disapprove the Conduct of *Diomedes*. *Venus* having gone to complain to her Mother *Dione* of the Wound she had received, *Dione* (B. 5. p. 196.) tells her for her Encouragement and Consolation, "You aren't the only one among the Immortals, whom the sacrilegious Boldness of Men dare to attack." Hereupon she makes an Enumeration of all the Gods who had been wounded by Men; and naming *Hercules* in particular, who wounded *Pluto*, "This unfortunate, insolent and impious Person," says she, (p. 198.) who was not afraid of committing Sacrilege, and who had the Boldness to wound with  
"his

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“ his Arrows the immortal Gods —  
 “ *And then returning to Diomedes*, This  
 “ foolish Man did not remember, that  
 “ those who had the Folly to fight a-  
 “ gainst the Gods, do not continue a  
 “ long Time upon Earth; and that their  
 “ tender Infants don’t sit upon their  
 “ Knees, nor give them the sweet Name  
 “ of Father, after their Return from their  
 “ Expeditions and bloody Wars. Let  
 “ this *Diomedes*, how brave soever,  
 “ take heed that some Deity, stronger  
 “ than you, don’t fight against him; and  
 “ that the wise Daughter of *Adrastus*, and  
 “ the generous *Egialia*, Wife of that fa-  
 “ mous Warrior, being frightned in  
 “ the Night by some sinister Dream,  
 “ don’t very soon fill his Palace with  
 “ Cries, and waken all his House, call-  
 “ ing for her Husband, the Bravest of  
 “ the *Grecians*; her Husband, the first  
 “ Object of her Love and tenderest Af-  
 “ fections.” They’ll be answered to this  
 Discourse, that *Dione* here flatters her  
 Daughter and herself, by impertinently  
 applying a Revenge that only concern’d  
 the just Gods, or the Symbol and Re-  
 presentatives of Justice, who were pro-  
 vok’d. No; Madam D. her self under-  
 stands this Discourse in the literal and  
 proper Sense, wholly forgetting the Al-  
 legory

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legory of a Hero opposing or fighting against Vice or sensual Pleasure; she enters here into the Interests of *Dione*, Mother of *Venus*, and soon presents us with the Moral of this Goddess, against those who attack the Gods. "Those Invectives, "*says she*, (1. 460.) which *Dione* makes "here against *Hercules*, and consequently "against *Diomedes*, are so many moral "Precepts, which *Homer* gives his Reader, to engage him to fear and reverence the Deities." Upon the Exclamation of the Goddess, Foolish and unthinking Man! not to remember that those who fought against the Gods, continue but a short Time upon Earth, *Madam D.* says, (*Ib.*) "This shews admirable Conduct and Address, thus "to insert Sentences without their appearing such, and whose Effect we feel, as it were, without either knowing or seeing them. *Homer* does not "give us here a more peculiar and distinguish'd Sentence, by saying, that all "those that fight against the Gods, die immediately; but he says, the foolish Man did not remember that those, " &c. As if those Truths were Sentiments engraven upon the Hearts of all Men. *Homer* is the first who shew'd "the Art of thus placing and inserting  
" Sen-



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“ Sentences, as it were, under an Art  
 “ and Disguise. Lastly, *says she, Dione*  
 “ foretels to *Diomedes*, that a God one  
 “ Day will revenge *Venus*, and punish him  
 “ for his audacious Sacrilege.” Thus *Dio-*  
*medes* may be in the right Allegorically,  
 but is in the wrong Theologically, and  
 shall be punish’d Historically. Indeed, if  
*Homer* had intended to shew, that it is im-  
 pious to oppose Dissention, or Discord  
 and Pleasure, the Allegory were here  
 infinitely better fram’d and sustain’d;  
 nor could he have chose a juster than  
 that of *Diomedes*’ being punish’d for  
 having fought against *Mars* and *Venus*;  
 but what is more, it can’t be doubted  
 but this was the true Scope of the Alle-  
 gory, if we examine it by the most ju-  
 dicious Rule of explaining of obscure,  
 conceal’d or disguis’d Precepts, in a  
 Work, by those which are clear and  
 plain: For I see that *Thetis*, in the first  
 B. says to *Achilles*, (p. 28.) “ My Son,  
 “ continue in your Ships, and shew the  
 “ *Greeks* Marks of your Resentment.”  
 And in B. 24. “ My Son, ’tis very good  
 “ for a Man to enjoy the highest Plea-  
 “ sure with a Woman.

Ἀγαθὸν ὃ γυναικὶ περ ἐν φιλότῃτι μίσχεται,  
*Bonum verò mulieri in amore misceri.* /

Here

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Here are the Thoughts of *Homer*, without any Ambiguity or Obscurity at all, with reference to Discord and sensual Pleasure; and consequently, the Principle by which we shou'd explain the Allegory we have been here treating of.

In general, Whence comes it that *Homer* never says a Word, that in the least favours the Interpretation of his Allegories, especially his moral Ones, which are design'd for the general and publick Use? For in the whole Course of the *Iliad*, 'tis not *Homer* who is Moral, but Madam D. and this even often in direct Opposition and Contradiction to her Author. I read, for Example, in the first Remark upon B. 5. (p. 435.) "*Diomedes's* being piqu'd at *Agamemnon's* taxing him with want of Courage, surpasses himself, and does incredible Exploits. *Minerva* assists him in the Design, because true Wisdom will have us revenge Injuries done us, no other ways than by illustrious Actions that shew their Falshood." If *Homer* had this Thought, why did he not express it? Wou'd it have dishonour'd his Poem? I see afterwards, in the Text, that *Minerva* says to *Diomedes*, (B. 5. p. 178.) "If any God come and surprize thee under a humane Shape, take care of  
" fight-

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“ fighting against the Immortals, except  
 “ solely against the Daughter of *Jupiter*,  
 “ the beautiful *Venus*; if she ventures to  
 “ come into the Battel, engage her bold-  
 “ ly, and wound her, without the least  
 “ Hesitation or Apprehension.” *Ma-*  
*dam D.* says hereupon, (1. 443.)  
 “ That ’tis not difficult to pierce the  
 “ Sense of this Allegory, which com-  
 “ mands a Man of true Courage and  
 “ Bravery to yield to the Gods, and to  
 “ fight only against *Venus*.” What wou’d  
 hinder me from seeing or understanding  
 it thus, is the Exception itself, which  
 appears to me very pernicious; for it  
 wou’d follow from thence, that of all  
 the Vices, a Man of true Bravery and  
 Courage need only oppose and avoid  
 that of sensual Pleasure. But further,  
 this Exception is ridiculous in the moral  
 View ascribed to the Poet, since in an  
 Instant he makes *Diomedes* engage *Mars*,  
 by the Exhortation of *Minerva* herself.  
 “ *Diomedes*, who art so dear to me,  
 “ says she to him, (p. 230.) neither  
 “ fear the God *Mars*, nor any other  
 “ of the immortal Deities.” Could  
 any one possibly add more absurdly a  
 Fault in Composition to a Fault in Mo-  
 rality? *Minerva*, (in p. 178.) forgot to  
 name *Mars* with *Venus*, as two Vices we  
 ought



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ought to combat and oppose; she names him here, and presently spoils the Allegory, by adding, *Fear none of the other immortal Deities*; as if they were all Vices: contrary to what she herself affirms, *Beware of fighting against any of the immortal Deities, except Venus*; and against the moral Precepts, which even *Homer* himself, according to *Madam D.* (p. 460.) gives us in the same Book, concerning reverencing the Gods. But I can't omit producing on this Occasion, before I finish this Article, one of the most pleasant Discourses in the whole *Iliad*, with Respect to the Person who pronounces it: 'Tis the same *Diomedes*, who, seeing *Glaucus* come to fight him, in B. 6. tells him in (p. 246.) "If you are any  
" of the Immortals, who are come  
" down from *Olympus*, I declare I don't  
" pretend to fight against the Gods." He, who in the preceding Book, without going higher, had attack'd *Apollo*, *Mars* and *Venus*, says here, that he won't fight with any of the Gods; and don't so much as prevent the Objection that might have been made him on this Occasion. This is a Proof of *Homer's* Memory and Attention. Yea, further, *Diomedes* confirms the Maxim of not fighting with the Gods; " By the History  
" of

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“ of *Lycurgus*, the Son of *Dryas*, who was  
 “ struck with Blindness for having pur-  
 “ sued the Nurses of *Bacchus*. *Bacchus*  
 “ frightened, threw himself headlong in-  
 “ to the Sea: *Thetis* receiv’d him into  
 “ her Bosom, and with Difficulty re-  
 “ cover’d him of his Fright; so exces-  
 “ sive great was the pannick Fear and  
 “ Terror this violent and furious Man  
 “ had imprinted on him.” If one is  
 ever so little acquainted with ancient Hi-  
 story, one must know in what Venera-  
 tion *Bacchus* was held principally for his  
 Courage, and which he never employ’d,  
 according to *Diodorus Siculus*’s own  
 Terms, B. 3. but for the Punishment of  
 the Wicked, and the Advantage of Man-  
 kind: Ἐπὶ κτλᾶσι μὲν τῶν ἀσεβῶν, εὐερ-  
 γησιν δὲ τοῦ κρῖνου γένους τῶν ἀνθρώπων.  
 In this View, we can’t but be astonish’d  
 at this sole Circumstance *Homer* re-  
 lates of the Life of this God.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

*Of his Physical Allegories.*

IT is not doubted but the first Pagan Writers, having but a very confus'd and superficial Knowledge of Natural Philosophy, and therefore being incapable of explaining the Nature of Things, had therefore recourse to Fables and Allegories, to which their Readers of themselves were but too much inclin'd. Of this *Cicero* has given us a full and authentick Proof and Testimony. His 2d Book of the Nature of the Gods, is almost wholly imploy'd in only explaining the Relation that each particular Deity had to some Element, or Natural Body. There, indeed, we find that *Jupiter* represents the Æthereal Matter, and *Juno* the grosser Air below it; and which resembles him so much, and is so closely join'd and united to him, as to give Occasion to consider this Goddess as the Sister and Wife of *Jupiter*. 'Tis the same with the other Deities, between whom they had divided Nature, or rather whose constituent Parts they them-

M

selves



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selves made. I allow and grant then  
 this first Institution of the Deities, as an  
 historical Fact, true in general: But be-  
 sides that the particular Applications  
 which later Writers have made of each  
 Deity, to each Element or natural Body,  
 often appear unnatural, and consequent-  
 ly very doubtful; they are also very  
 different in different Authors: This is  
 what will appear obvious and mani-  
 fest to every one, who will compare  
*Varro*, who had made a particular En-  
 quiry upon this Subject, with Reference  
 to the *Latin* Tongue; and *Macrobius*,  
 who hath added to the Etymology of  
 the *Latin* Names of the Deities, that of  
 their *Greek* Names; and *Diodorus Siculus*,  
 who ascribes the Origin of all those No-  
 tions and Ideas to the *Egyptians*. The  
 Variety of the Applications related by all  
 those Authors, is the Reason of the great  
 Difficulty, if not Impossibility, of esta-  
 blishing any fix'd or certain Rule for the  
 understanding of Allegories. These Un-  
 certainties and Ambiguities are what  
 have render'd the Mythological Authors  
 and Allegorical Writers so contemptible  
 of late, since a Taste for exact Reason-  
 ing and Justness of Thought hath happi-  
 ly prevail'd and taken Place. Allegorical  
 Poets and Philosophers, are Authors  
 who

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who express themselves by Signs, the Meaning and Signification whereof, is wholly doubtful and uncertain; and their Commentators are Interpreters, who wou'd determine the Words of their Authors to such a Sense, as we may find a hundred others equally proper and agreeable. Represent to your self a People who make use of an arbitrary Language, in which some speak as they please, and others understand as they please; and where yet Fancy and popular Prejudice and Partiality gives some the Commendation of speaking better, and understanding better than others; there was really something resembling this among the *Egyptians*, and even among the *Greeks* and *Romans* themselves, upon all Subjects of Religion: But in a truly learned and knowing Age, the uncertain and arbitrary Language of Allegories in Authors, in all Matters pertaining to the *Belles Lettres* and polite Learning, will only be look'd upon as the Source of the most false and perverted Judgment, corrupt Reasoning, and a vicious Taste; and in Interpreters, as an easy Method of defending, yea, and of exalting and even consecrating, either the most trivial and impertinent, or the vilest, most monstrous and absurd Compo-

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sitions. But setting aside the great Differences between Authors, we should be content if there might be a Rule of Decision herein that we cou'd observe and follow ; if every Poet having a Right to present us with his own peculiar System of Allegory, they gave us only the Key of *Homer's* Allegories ; and that we might know what is particularly meant by the Names of every one of his Deities. But we are not yet got thus far, and we shall soon see remarkable Differences and Variations in the Allegories of this particular Poet. In the 5th Book of the *Iliad*, (p. 179.) 'tis said, " That the  
 " venerable or adorable *Juno* her self  
 " was exposed to the Fury of Mortals,  
 " when the magnanimous Son of *Am-*  
 " *phytrion* let fly an Arrow with three  
 " Points, and wounded her in the  
 " Breast ; and that even *Pluto* himself,  
 " that fierce and inflexible Deity of Hell,  
 " how terrible soever, was cruelly in-  
 " sulted by the same Person." Madam  
 D. (i. 459.) thus interprets this Alle-  
 gory after *Eustathius*. "*Juno* is the  
 " Air, all above the Earth ; *Pluto*  
 " is the Air which is beneath it ; *Her-*  
 " *cules* is the philosophical Mind and  
 " Genius, the true genuine Son and Off-  
 " spring of *Jupiter* : *Hercules* throws  
 " his



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“ his Arrows against *Juno* and *Pluto*, and  
 “ wounds them ; *i. e.* The philosophical  
 “ cal Genius darts its Reflections, Views  
 “ and Ideas, (*represented undoubtedly by*  
*the three Points of the Arrow*) “ and by  
 “ this Means discovers and penetrates  
 “ what *Juno* and *Pluto* contain that is  
 “ most conceal'd; for nothing can escape  
 “ the Light and Search of true Philoso-  
 “ phy.” I won't cavil with *Eustathius*  
 about the Study of Nature, here repre-  
 sented under the Image of a Rape, or a  
 cruel and violent Attack; whereas it  
 shou'd rather have been under the  
 Symbol of a Search and Enquiry, full of  
 Love and Esteem. I shall only observe,  
 that *Juno* here signifies the Air, as has  
 been already proved: But if we consult  
 the 21st B. we shall there find this Com-  
 bat between *Juno* and *Diana*, (*p. 239.*)  
 “ *Juno* takes hold of both her Hands  
 “ with her Left, and with her Right  
 “ taking her Quiver from her Shoulders,  
 “ gives her a Blow upon both her  
 “ Cheeks, smiling, which makes her  
 “ stagger from one Side to the other,  
 “ and then leaves her; all her Arrows  
 “ fall at her Feet.” Upon this Madam  
*D.* says in her Remarks, (*p. 539.*) “ I  
 “ am perswaded that by this Fiction of  
 “ the Combat between *Juno* and *Diana*,

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“ *Homer* wou’d poetically describe an  
 “ Eclipse of the Moon, which is only  
 “ caus’d by the Shadow of the Earth,  
 “ the same with *Juno*. *Juno* holds both  
 “ *Diana’s* Hands, as it were, fast bound,  
 “ *i. e.* to bind up all her Faculties; she  
 “ takes off her Quiver from her Shoul-  
 “ der, because she hinders and prevents  
 “ the Rays of the Sun from enlightening  
 “ her; she strikes her upon the Cheeks,  
 “ because this Darkness lowers and hides  
 “ the whole Face of the Moon, when the  
 “ Eclipse is Total: (*She ought to have*  
*struck her upon the Nose, to mark a*  
*Central Eclipse.*) “ Lastly, She makes  
 “ her Arrows fall at her Feet, because  
 “ all the Rays of the Sun remain stop’d  
 “ and suspended under her.” I faithful-  
 ly transcribe these Remarks intire, to  
 shew the Authors whom I confute, that  
 I don’t intend to suppress or conceal  
 any thing they may think can add  
 the least Degree or Shadow of Pro-  
 bability to their Expectations. But the  
 Point I here chiefly aim at, is, that *Juno*,  
 who signified the Air, in the 5th B. sig-  
 nifies the Earth in the 21st. They may  
 perhaps reply, that these Deities signi-  
 fied different Things, according to the  
 Actions they make them perform, or ac-  
 cording to the particular Manner in  
 which

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which they are mix'd and combin'd together. Allowing this, they ought then to give us Rules hereof, justify'd by the constant Practice of *Homer*; but 'tis quite otherwise, for we have in the 1st B. *Jupiter* threatening to chastise and beat *Juno*, (8. 37.) signifying, according to *Eustathius*, cited by *Madam D.* (1. 325.) the *Æther* acting upon the Elements; and you shall see this Idea destroy'd by the Explication which *Madam D.* gives of a Passage in the 15th B. where the same *Jupiter* threatening the same *Juno*, tells her (p. 345.) " Have you forgot  
" the Time when I loaded your Feet  
" with two heavy Fetters, and bound  
" your Hands with a golden Chain that  
" cou'd not be broke; and that in this  
" State and Condition you remained a  
" long Time, suspended in the midst of  
" Air." *Juno*, or the Air, suspended in the midst of the Air, is a very happy Discovery. But let us hear *Madam D.*  
" The Physical Allegory appears to me  
" very sensible, says she, (p. 593, 594.)  
" *Homer* here mysteriously explains the  
" Nature of the Air, which is *Juno*:  
" The two Fetters fix'd to her Feet, are  
" the two Elements, Earth and Water;  
" the golden Chains, binding her  
" Hands, is the *Æther*, or Fire which  
" possesses



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“possesses the Upper Region.” I don’t know what *Jupiter* will here signify, for we find his Post assign’d to the Golden Chains, which represents the Æther he himself ought to represent.

I say moreover, that tho’, even supposing or allowing that in the first Institution of Things, the Gods had signified the Elements, or other natural Bodies, yet the Allegory soon after vanished, and was lost in perpetual Oblivion; for indeed, we give much more heed to what Things are actually, than to what they are in their first Beginning, or original Institution; but more especially in Words, whatever their primary or original Signification was, we never understand them but in the common, generally receiv’d, or vulgar Meaning. Therefore, tho’ the first Men who spoke of Nature, among the *Pagans*, had personaliz’d the Æthereal Matter, and call’d it *Jupiter*; yet ’tis certain, that in the following Ages, and particularly in *Homer’s* Time, the Word *Zeus* did not suggest or excite the Idea of Æthereal Matter; and that the whole World us’d to conceive by this Word, one God, the Father and King of Gods and Men, and Sovereign Lord of the Universe. The other Idea  
might,

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might, perhaps, remain in the Head of some learned Man, but the People had absolutely lost and forgot it; and *Homer* cou'd not doubt but he shou'd offend, shock or scandalize the greatest Part of his Readers, by making *Jupiter* commit a morally vicious Action, under Pretence that by it was to be understood the Physical Action of the *Æthereal* Matter upon the inferior Bodies. There are even Deities, whose Allegory is explain'd by their Names, and concerning whom the most ignorant can't be deceived; for Example, *Zephyrus* and *Flora*. These Gods spring purely from the Imagination of Poets, who, to add more Spirit and Fire to their Poetry, have animated universal Nature: But, even with Respect to these, 'tis sufficient that the natural Things they signify, shou'd have been transform'd into some gracious and benign Deity, to oblige a Poet never to speak of them but honourably and favourably, and to suppress all that is mean or injurious in the Applications of the Allegory: Thus, tho' the Wind that blows and prevails in the Spring is sometimes very fatal and pernicious to the Flowers, a Poet mustn't represent this Effect, by *Zephyrus* beating of *Flora*, because this is contrary

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trary to the mild and gracious Idea which the Fable gives of these two Deities: Much more ought they to avoid these sort of Images, with Respect to the superior Order of Deities, whose physical Generation and Original is not express'd by their Names. Thus, allowing we might represent the Conjunction of the Æthereal Matter with the grosser Air, by the Union of *Jupiter* with *Juno* his Sister and Wife, (which I hardly think;) it is at least certain that we can't make use of those Deities as Symbols or Images of these Elements, upon the Supposition of their mutual Confusion or Opposition; because the Application in this Particular is manifestly injurious to the Honour of the supreme Deity: But *Homer's* Conduct, at least according to *Madam D.'s* Interpretations, is quite the Reverse of this Principle. There are many Passages in the *Iliad* wherein *Jupiter* and *Juno*, as well as the other Deities, agree together, wherein they might very well represent Appearances and Phœnomena of Nature; but on these Occasions we never find any Allusion made to them; and even in this Passage of the first B. of which we are now speaking, so long as the Discourse of *Jupiter* is consistent,  
he



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he represents God; or, according to Md. D.'s Explication elsewhere related, he represents a prudent Husband: 'Tis not till two Lines before the End of his Speech, when he speaks of Punishing or Beating, that he begins to represent *Æthereal Matter*, *i. e.* *Jupiter* is only Allegorical in that single Particular, which should never have been mention'd, but totally suppress'd, or cut off from the Allegory.

I deduce from this last Reflection a Rule of common Sense, the exact Observance of which yet more nearly concerns the Interest of the Poet, than either the Pleasure or Advantage of the Reader; that is, still carefully to distinguish, by some sensible Mark, allegorical Descriptions and Painting from all others, and to allow them such a reasonable Length and Extent, as may contribute to our clearer apprehending and understanding them. This Rule has perhaps been observ'd in the Battles of the 21st B. which are foreign enough to the Poem, and long enough in themselves, to make us imagine, that *Homer* had some particular View and Design in Fictions, which otherwise are so extravagant. But the Quarrel between *Jupiter* and *Juno* in the 1st B. naturally springs and arises from what precedes, and influences  
what

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what follows: Therefore I have no Reason to believe that the Poet intended any Thing else but the first, natural and obvious Sense, which also agrees very well with the rest of his Poem; besides, what bears an Allusion to the Elements, even according to Madam *D.*'s own Interpretation, is so short, that 'tis imperceptible. To conclude: When from a Discourse near eight Verses in Length, such as that of *Jupiter* to *Juno*, I had first receiv'd the Idea of the supreme God, who hides his Decrees from the Angels themselves; of a prudent Husband, who distinguishes what he ought to communicate to his Wife, from what he ought to keep secret; can they imagine that, without the least Hint from the Poet, I shou'd change this Idea all of a sudden to the Opposition and Confusion of the Elements, when this Person, so unworthy of those sacred and venerable Names which Madam *D.* gives him, threatens to beat his Wife with Stripes and corporal Punishment? For, lastly, *Homer's* Allegories have not even the Advantage of the common Enigmas, or Riddles, whose Propriety and Justness, tho' at first cover'd, disguis'd and conceal'd, discover to the whole World, and necessarily oblige them

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them all to admit and own the same true and single Explication. Madam D. indeed takes us for much more subtle Persons than we really are, when she puts the Question in so easy a Manner, "Who does not see that the Allegory saves here all the Absurdity and Want of Decorum?" As for me, I own, I saw it so little before her new Interpretation, that I even can't see it after it. They must at last be reduc'd, instead of all other Answers, to this poor and pitiful Shift and Refuge, viz. to say, that the literal and natural Sense of *Jupiter's* beating *Juno*, or other such like Fictions, is so ridiculous and impious, that we must necessarily have recourse to some more favourable Interpretation. Judge what Honour this Answer does a Poet, subject, as we have before observ'd, to the Rule of the first Aspect and Appearance of Things. But further, if the Extravagancies of *Homer's* Persons were a just and sufficient Reason for having recourse to Allegory, then *Achilles*, *Agamemnon*, *Diomedes*, and all the rest who are guilty of so many gross Follies and Absurdities, must all be allegorical Persons, against the Opinion of Madam D. (*Pref. p. 61.*) who opening her self a Door to Allegories,



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ries, thinks she may close and shut it wherever she pleases.

With Reference even to the Deities themselves, Madam *D.* don't always allegorically interpret all the Reproaches and Infamies of which *Jupiter* accuses *Juno*; as that, for Example, in B. 18. (p. 129.) "Without doubt, all the *Greeks* are your Children." At first I understood this to be one of those vain Discourses, to which *Homer's* Gods are very subject in their Assemblies; but Madam *D.* informs me (3. 470.) "That it is a bitter Raillery, intimating as if *Juno* was unfaithful." This is indeed very pretty, for *Jupiter* to dishonour himself, by reproaching chaste *Juno* with having peopled the World with Bastards: Indeed, this is so shocking, as to need an Allegory to save it. I find likewise that there was also need of them, to save the Offensiveness of that Discourse, wherein *Jupiter* delivers to *Juno* an exact Enumeration of all his Mistresses, which he sacrifices to her in that Passage of the 14th B. (p. 329.) upon Occasion of which, Madam *D.* says (2. 585.) "That *Homer* was not less capable of succeeding in the tender and passionate Way of Writing, than the bold and terrible." In a Word,  
since

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since Madam D. did not think an Allegory necessary here, she might have avoided it every where; and so much the more, because Physical Allegories in particular are contrary, even to the Institution of Symbolical Discourses. For after all, what Use have the sacred or prophane Writers made of Types and Symbols? They have employ'd them to express, more or less clearly, some Truth of Religion or Morality; because indeed as the less noble ought to be subservient to that which is more so, Physick ought to be subservient to Morality. Thus it is overturning the Order and Institution of Things to employ Persons that perform good or bad Actions; in a Word, moral Actions, to represent physical Effects. The admirable Parables contain'd in both the Testaments, and even in the Fables of *Æsop* and *La Fontaine*, are taken in a Sense quite opposite to this. Nothing can be more charming and agreeable, for Example, than to see in this last, *Phæbus* and *Boreus*, allegorical Persons, striving with one another who shou'd pull off the Cloak of a Traveller. The Wind in vain makes Use of all his Violence and Fury, and the Sun gets the Victory by the gentle Heat of his Rays. Hence the Poet concludes,

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cludes, that Gentleness does more than Violence. But what can be more shocking, than to see *Jupiter* so far inrag'd against *Juno*, as to beat her, only to inform one, that *Ætherial Matter* is in a kind of Conflict with the grosser Air? What is pleasant herein, is their calling this, the explaining the Fight and Struggle of the Elements. This, no doubt, is a fine Way of explaining a Point of Natural Philosophy; and indeed it was worth while for this to risque the Impertinence and Impiety of the Text. As to Physick, that Science above all requires Clearness and Exactness, and consequently admits less than any other of the Mysteries and Confusions of Allegories. Besides, the *Iliad* is one of the Poems of Antiquity, that contains the least of Physick. *Homer* describes twenty times a Lance, a Chariot, the Preparation of a Feast; and I can't perceive the least Particular of a philosophical Opinion, which wou'd have been mighty curious as to the History of Sciences; that wou'd have shew'd the nice Talent of expressing clearly and agreeably the most difficult Things; and which, in short, wou'd have been much more worthy of his Poem, than those Trifles, the Descriptions of which he repeats so tediously.



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diously. Without mentioning *Lucretius*, who has compos'd an entire Poem upon such like Matters; to which, even according to Madam D. (*Pref. p. 31.*) he has given all the Harmony that Poetry is capable of; nothing can be more perfect in the Formation of the World than *Ovid*, at the Beginning of his *Metamorphoses*. *Virgil* has very properly plac'd in his 6th B. a kind of Metempsychosis, and many other Ideas of Natural Philosophy or Metaphysicks, which he has borrow'd, according to *Servius*, from the different Sects of Antiquity. 'Tis true, all these Systems are false, but their Application is sure: This is all that can be requir'd from a Poet; the rest is the Fault of ancient Philosophy. But as to the Moderns, the metaphysical Discourses of *P. Malebranche*, and particularly those that bear for Title, *Of the Magnificence of God in the Grandeur and Number of his Works*, or *Of his Providence in the Ordering and Disposal of Bodies*, as well as the Discourses of Mr. *De Fontanelle* upon the *Plurality of Worlds*, show, that Nature well examin'd, as far as it is in our Reach, and conjectur'd in the Remainder by the Principles of noble Philosophy, offers to the Mind a Prospect, not only finer,

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but infinitely more extensive, than all that the most unbounded Imaginations ever produc'd. 'Tis also upon this Account that our Philosophy disdains those Embellishments that compose the Sublime of the Ancients: I dare affirm, for Example, that those Allusions, Metaphors, or Allegories, concerning the human Body, which *Longinus* in his 26th Ch. cites from *Plato*, with so many Encomiums, wou'd be at present not only very despicable in a Treatise of Natural Philosophy; where they cou'd not possibly be admitted, but in any other Work whatsoever: For whereas the ancient Philosophy being very poor in itself, was obliged to borrow Figures from Eloquence, and Fictions from Poetry, to maintain itself; Modern Philosophy, being very sublime and fruitful in itself, now lends its Spirit of Justness and Exactness to Eloquence, and even to Poetry; and wou'd perhaps furnish them, on many Occasions, with many very advantageous Materials.

Though the secret Causes of the Effects of Nature, is properly the Object of Natural Philosophy as the Collision or Clashing of the Elements is generally the secret Cause of the Form that we see in the  
Uni-

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Universe; we nevertheless here comprehend, under the Physical Allegories of *Homer*, some disguis'd Descriptions, which *Madam D.* (3.534.) thinks he has made from certain natural Effects, as to what is most sensible in them; as that of Inundation and Drought, under the Names of *Scamander* and *Vulcan*. And hereupon I desire to know what Reason *Homer* could have for concealing such Descriptions in Allegories? A Reason may be alledged for disguising Descriptions purely Physical, because they are in a manner foreign to Poetry, and at the same Time perhaps not agreeable to the Taste, or within the Reach, of every Reader's Understanding: But what can be more proper to introduce in an Epic Poem, than the Description of the sensible Effects of Nature? Can any Thing be finer than that Description of near an hundred Verses, which *Tasso* makes in the 13th Cant. of a Drought that reduc'd the Army of the *Croisades* to the last Extremity, and which, at the Prayer that *Godfrey* address'd to Heaven,

*Con la fede  
Che faria stare i fiumi & gir i monti,*



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was converted into a salutary Shower of Rain; which the same Poet describes at length, with the same Fruitfulness and Elegance? But *Homer* is not only careless of raising such sort of Paintings from his Subject, but even neglects the Occasions that naturally offer themselves. The *Iliad* begins with a Plague that gives Place to the Quarrel between *Achilles* and *Agamemnon*, as the *Aeneid* begins with a Tempest that casts *Aeneas* upon the Shores of *Africa*: Compare these two Pieces; *Virgil's* Tempest, independent even of the Conversation of *Juno* and *Æolus*, that precedes it, and of the Shipwreck that follows, fills forty Verses, perfectly well wrought up: *Homer's* Plague is crowded up into three single Verses, by which we learn, "That *Apollo* at first smote the Mules  
" and Doggs; but that the *Greeks*  
" themselves soon after became the Prey  
" of his mortal Darts; and that every  
" where about there was nothing to be  
" seen but Heaps of Dead, upon Funer-  
" al Piles that burnt continually." This is all in *Madam D.'s* Translation, (p. 4.) without mentioning the Poets, as *Lucretius*, and many others, that exercised their Talents upon the Description of the Plague. Prose Authors have not neglected

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neglected so great a Subject; that of *Thucydides*, which gave Place to that of *Lucretius*, is famous among the Ancients; and Antiquity can boast of none finer than that of *Boccace*. Whence proceeds it then, that *Homer's* Admirers look upon him as the greatest Painter that ever liv'd, especially as to the Particulars of Nature? The Reason is, that the feeling Sense of Satisfaction which arises in the Perusal of a Modern, by Works that are perfectly correct and finish'd, is excited in the reading of *Homer* by a few light Sketches and Flights, the Effect of which is finish'd by a fond Prejudice and Prepossession. For, after all, setting aside the Buckler of *Achilles*, where Nature was entirely represented in the Circumference of twelve or fifteen Feet, there are no Descriptions of natural Things to be found in *Homer's* Poem, but those that occur in his Comparisons, where they are generally too long as Comparisons, and too short as Descriptions. Besides, Paintings that are presented by a Comparison, are not half so affecting as direct Paintings, as Madam D. is of Opinion: For concerning the Fiction of *Pluto's* being terrified at the Stroke of *Neptune's* Trident, she says, (3. 517.) that *Virgil*

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imitates him, speaking of the Gap that *Hercules* made in the Cavern of *Cacus*, in the 8th B. of the *Æneids* :

*Non secus ac si qua penitus vi terra debiscens, &c.*

But, adds she, this Copy is in every Thing inferior to the Original ; and its principal Fault consists, in that *Virgil* has made a Comparison of that of which *Homer* has made an Action. For this Reason it is, that I am infinitely more touch'd and affected with the Description of a pastoral Life, which the Retreat of *Erminius* to an old Shepherd has given *Tasso* room to make in the 7th *Cant.* than with all the Comparisons that *Homer* draws of the Country, in his hottest Battles ; and from which he passes so agreeably, according to *Madam D.* (3. 533.) from a rough and harsh Tone, to that which is more soft and tender.

But, after all, to take this Description of an Inundation and Drought, as *Homer* would give it us, and under the Names of *Vulcan* and *Scamander*, the Allegory is not perfect. With respect to the Inundation, the *Scamander* overflows ; and, according to the Poet, pursues



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sues and overtakes the Steps of *Achilles*. Thus far 'tis very well ; and as the *Scamander* is a River, the Description is rather natural than allegorical. But with respect to Drought, represented by *Vulcan*, who comes to drive back the River *Scamander*, by burning its Waters, the Allusion appears to me absolutely false ; and tho' Madam D. says, (3 534.) " That if *Homer* has lively discuss'd " an Inundation with a great deal of " Life, he paints Drought with no less " Force, that is alone capable to resist " it." I find it difficult to force my Imagination to acknowledge Drought in *Vulcan*, who, according even to Madam D. (1. 327.) is the material and sensible Fire, very different from Heat that causes Drought ; for Drought is a long while before it has its Effect, which is contrary to what happens in *Homer* ; for *Vulcan* in a Moment consumes a great Part of the River *Scamander*. The Allegory wou'd have been much more just, if *Vulcan*, for Example, had set fire to the Entrenchments of the *Trojans*, within or without the Place, and that the *Scamander* had extinguish'd it ; for indeed, Water is every where made use of to extinguish Fire ; but I never knew that Fire was employ'd to drive away

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Water. It is therefore a precarious and vain Encomium in all its Parts, which Madam D. gives *Homer* upon this very Occasion, when she says, (v. 3. 534.)

“ There is nothing in Nature with  
 “ which this Poet does not adorn his  
 “ Poem; but in his greatest Enthusiasm,  
 “ his Wisdom is admirable; and in his  
 “ most sublime Fictions, he never de-  
 “ parts from Nature; for it is from  
 “ beautiful Nature that what is truly  
 “ sublime flows, and nothing can be  
 “ truly so, but what is agreeable to  
 “ Nature.” *Homer* is so far from ha-  
 ving embellish’d his Poem with all that  
 is in Nature, that I have already re-  
 mark’d, he has not made in the  
 whole *Iliad* one direct Description of  
 natural Things; or at least those that  
 may be produc’d to contradict me, are  
 so lame and imperfect, that they will  
 do him more Hurt than Honour;  
 and for the allegorical Descriptions,  
 besides that there is nothing in it-  
 self more unnatural than an Allegory,  
 those in *Homer*, as I have also de-  
 monstrated, wou’d generally be more  
 just, if they were taken in a contrary  
 Sense.

Besides

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Besides this Description of an Inundation and Drought, represented in the Combat between *Vulcan* and the River *Scamander*, *Homer* was upon the Point of giving us another upon the same Subject, in the Combat between *Neptune* and *Apollo*; but he forbore, and the Description was suppress'd, upon Account of *Apollo*'s refusing to engage with *Neptune*. Two things, says *Madam D.* (3. 538.) "hinder'd *Homer* from representing his Gods in Combat with one another." The Relation of the Theological Allegory, according to which *Apollo*, being Enemy to the *Trojans*, cou'd do no more in their Favour; and the Relation of the Physical Allegory, according to which *Homer* had nothing more to say here: "For this wou'd be the same, says she, (*Ibid.*) with the Combat between Drought and Moisture, and we ought to avoid Tautology and Repetition, which is always tedious and tiresome." This is, indeed, very pleasant to see a Poet that repeats, in a hundred Places of the *Iliad*, long Trains of Verses, without changing therein one single Word, commended for this Practice by *Eustathius* and *Madam D.* A Poet, with whom the Repetitions of Words are yet less considerable, than the



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the Repetitions of Things, who in a certain View has made of his whole Poem but a Heap of Combats and Battles; and who yet is here loth to present us with two Combats, which by the Character of the Actors, and the Turn of the Description, might be made infinitely different, under Pretence that the allegorical Sense of them wou'd be the same. Tautology, which Madam D. makes *Homer* so careful to avoid, does not fall upon the Things themselves, but upon the Manner of expressing them; and as one may be guilty of Repetition, in relating Things very different; one may likewise, without being guilty of Tautology, relate the very same Things, especially if they are so but in the allegorical Sense. In short, with Respect even to the Allegory, *Vulcan* and the River *Scamander* might simply have signified Fire and Water, which are in our Power, and at our Disposal; while at the same Time *Neptune* and *Apollo* might have stood for Drought and Moisture, which together compose that Temperature of the Air, or Disposition of the Earth, of which we are not Masters. After the same Manner we may very near destroy all those Interpretations that *Eustathius* or Madam D. give to

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to the tacit or negative Allegories of *Homer*; that is to say, the Reasons they bring for what he has not done. "An  
" evident Sign of the Wisdom of this  
" Poet, says *Madam D.* (3. 512.) concerning the mad and extravagant Fictions of the Combats of the Gods with one another, either in the 20th. or 21st of the *Iliad*, is his not allotting to any Side or Party *Pluto*, *Ceres* and *Bacchus*, because he cou'd not find for these Gods any probable Foundations for Allegories. For indeed *Pluto* cou'd not appear in the Defence of any Side, because he is a God that desires nothing but the Death and Destruction of Men; and who, as *Sophocles* says, delights in their Groans and Tears, with which he is never satiated: Neither could *Bacchus* nor *Ceres*, who nourish Mankind, appear in a War that ravages the Countries, and carries Desolation every where throughout. This Remark of *Eustathius* is alone sufficient to shew, that *Homer* never departs from natural or supernatural Probability, and that his Fictions have always some Foundation." But indeed it is to have too great a Diffidence of the Allegories, and not render Justice enough to their empty Brains, and the Fruitfulness

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fulness of their Inventions, to believe that they wou'd have stop'd short, if *Homer* had made those Gods engage. The Misfortune wou'd have been very great, if he had not found *Pluto* some Employment in the War, which is his greatest Resource. Nothing would have had a better Effect, than to have introduc'd *Bacchus* and *Ceres* disputing about the Pre-eminence of one before the other: This Allegory, were it well plac'd and treated, wou'd have been agreeable, even to the Taste of our Age, and wou'd not have been more remote from the principal Subject, than that of the Eclipse represented in the Combat between *Juno* and *Diana*.

After all, if there are certain Gods that ought not to fight against one another, as *Neptune* against *Apollo*, because the latter is Fate it self; or *Mercury* against *Latona*, because the former is the God of Peace; why does *Homer* himself make the Proposition of these Battles? *Mercury* (B. 21. p. 240.) addressing himself to *Latona*, who spake not a Word to him, accosts her thus: " Goddess, I  
 " have no mind to engage with you; it  
 " is too great Rashness to attack the  
 " Women of *Jupiter*: Boast as much  
 " as you please, in the Assembly  
 " of



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“ of the Gods, that I was not able to  
“ resist your Force, but was subdued by  
“ you.” This is, indeed, a very pleasant Supposition, that *Latona* shou'd have Reason to brag of her subduing a God, whom she had not so much as touch'd : This is a Flight not to be found in Nature, and which consequently the Poet draws from the Perverseness of his own Mind. Nevertheless, *Latona*, much more mild and pacifick than the God of Peace, retires without making any Answer. These are Discourses well imagin'd, and Scenes well fill'd.

I shall conclude all that we have said in this *Chap.* with saying, That to save the literal Sense of *Homer* by his allegorical Sense, is to defend him from one Impiety and Absurdity by another. In short, if after the Opinion of *Eustathius* and *Mad. D.* I dare offer mine, I incline very much to their Side, who think that *Homer* never had any of these Views ; and who, as *Plutarch* says, reject those Interpreters, *that forcibly strain Homer's Fictions, and draw them, as we may say, by the Hair, into allegorical Interpretations.* Most of the Gods have undoubtedly an allegorical Origin drawn from Nature or History, and the Enquiry after this Origin is certainly very curious ; but they  
are

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are no longer allegorical in *Homer*; and the Interpretations that are given of them, with respect to this Poet, will always appear chimerical to those who are not satisfied but with solid, or at least probable, Reasons. *Homer's* Stile is generally very remote from the Stile of all ancient and modern Writers, that have given themselves to Mystery and Allegory: They all make us sensible, not indeed of the Thing they wou'd say, but of their Intention of expressing some other Thing than what they do say. To speak only of the Ancients, this Intention is visible in *Pythagoras*, and even in *Plato*; tho' the latter, in my Opinion, had fewer Allegories than are attributed to him. But *Homer* is the most plain and simple of all Authors; never did any Man seek less after Refinement, or discover'd himself more freely to his own Disadvantage.

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CHAP.

CHAP. V.

*That the Prejudice and Prepossession of his fond Admirers, have not thought it enough to make foolish and absurd Excuses and Apologies for this his absurd Manner of treating and representing his Gods, but proceeded farther, and have pretended to authorize and justify it.*

IT won't be amiss here to display a remarkable Progress in the Zeal of *Homer's* Admirers. This Poet never merited any other than Excuses and Apologies, according to *F. Bossu*, for the wicked and shameful Ideas he has given of his Gods. Thus, upon Occasion of the Adultery of *Mars* and *Venus*, describ'd in the 8th B. of the *Odysssey*, *F. Bossu* (B. 5. ch. 2.) makes use of these moderate Terms: "We find, indeed, yet worse  
" Places, as the Adultery of *Mars* and  
" *Venus* in the *Odysssey*: But besides the  
" moral and physical Allegories, that  
" may in some measure excuse these Fi-  
" gures that are too bold, if not to say  
" coarse and vulgar; or that we find  
" some-



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“ something like it written in the Sim-  
 “ plicity of former Ages, by great and  
 “ famous Authors ; I add also, that  
 “ tho’ we take away the Allegory, we  
 “ don’t deprive *Homer* of any just Ex-  
 “ cuse : And to make this the more con-  
 “ spicuous, I say that we ought to con-  
 “ sider, that ’tis neither the Poet, nor  
 “ his Hero, nor a honest Man, that  
 “ makes this Relation ; but soft and ef-  
 “ feminate People, who cause it to be  
 “ sung during their Feasts. *Homer* then,  
 “ by the Example of this slothful and  
 “ vicious People, whose chief Pleasure  
 “ and Delight consisted in Singing, Dan-  
 “ cing, Eating and Drinking, teaches us  
 “ that those soft and effeminate Arts are  
 “ the great Source of Vice and Voluptu-  
 “ ousness ; and that Persons who thus  
 “ spend their Time, are generally pleas-  
 “ ed with hearing such infamous Stories,  
 “ and in making even the Gods them-  
 “ selves Partakers of their Guilt, and  
 “ Accomplices in their Crimes : Whence  
 “ we may infer, that *Homer’s* Relation  
 “ here is so far from being a pernicious  
 “ Example of Adultery and Wickedness,  
 “ that it is rather a seasonable Advice  
 “ and Instruction in Virtue and Good-  
 “ ness, viz. That in order effectually  
 “ to avoid such Crimes, they ought still  
 “ to

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“ to shun all those Arts and Snares,  
“ which lead and conduct thereto.”

We answer in general to this Vindication and Apology for *Homer*, that before it is possible to discover this deeply conceal'd Moral, the Example of the Gods is what will always have a great Sway and Influence, and here tends solely to Evil, and invites Mankind to their Imitation. “ But in fine, concludes *F. Bossu*,  
“ notwithstanding all his former Reasoning, a Poet ought to take a great deal of  
“ Care and Precaution in touching Incidents so nice and dangerous as those.  
“ If he is willing to do more Good than  
“ Hurt, he ought to study the Necessity, the Interest, the Humour of his  
“ Readers, and the Effect such Subjects  
“ may have upon their Minds; and to  
“ speak here freely, we live not now in  
“ an Age wherein Simplicity is capable  
“ of rendring this Matter so much as tolerable, or wherein it is possible to propose it, without corrupting the greater  
“ Part of the Readers, and encouraging  
“ Vice and Voluptuousness in others:  
“ Thus, how judicious or excusable soever *Homer* might have been in this  
“ Invention, a modern Poet wou'd not  
“ now be esteem'd so, if he were to imitate him in this Particular. It is good

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“ to teach what he has taught ; but it  
 “ is very bad to teach it after this Man-  
 “ ner.” There is nothing to be con-  
 demn’d in this Remark, which Reason  
 draws from the Difference of Times ;  
 for it seems *F. Bossu* looks upon the  
*Greeks*, in *Homer’s* Time, as perfect  
 Saints, upon whom the most pernicious  
 Examples cou’d have no Influence. But  
 should not even this Simplicity of that  
 Nation have made *Homer* think that  
 they might literally interpret his Ficti-  
 ons; and that his Readers then were not  
 capable of that Strength and Depth of  
 Thought, and Force of Reasoning, as,  
 with his modern Admirers, to draw such  
 excellent moral Instructions from a pro-  
 phane and impious Story. In short,  
 what bad Consequence has this horrid  
 Theology had, with respect to those sim-  
 ple People, whom it has entirely spoil’d  
 and corrupted ? Whereas now-a-Days,  
 when Religion has banish’d Idolatry from  
 the Minds of Men, and Philosophy has  
 secur’d and strengthen’d us against Preju-  
 dice and Prepossession of Antiquity, the  
 wicked and ridiculous Actions of *Ho-  
 mer’s* Gods cause no other Emotions in  
 us, than those of Horror and Compassion.

Mr.



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Mr. D. has recall'd the same Example of the Adultery of *Mars* and *Venus*, in the Remarks upon *Aristotle's* Poetry, (Chap. 26. p. 441, 442, and 443.) but he proceeds yet higher than F. *Bossu*; for after having faithfully transcrib'd all that we have related of the first Author, he changes his Excuse and Vindication into a very great Encomium; and thus he speaks, (p. 442.) "*Virgil*, in this Particular, is not more reserv'd than *Homer*; for in the 4th of the *Georgics*, he introduces a Nymph singing to her Mistress, who had none but Nymphs about her, the same Story of *Mars* and *Venus*. If either of these Poets are blame-worthy, continues Mr. D. it is undoubtedly *Virgil*." Here I must affirm by the by, that *Virgil* is less guilty than *Homer*, because he only intimates this History, and does not defile his Work, by particularizing of it to the Imagination of the Reader. "But neither the one nor the other, adds Mr. D. deserv'd to be blam'd; on the contrary, they both merit very great Commendation and Encomiums." For my Part, I say, with respect to *Homer*, that he is very much to be condemn'd, especially for the Turn of the Description; for it is very possible for a

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Painter to represent, in a very criminal Manner, the most moral Subjects; a *Joseph*, for Example, or a *Susanna*: And as to *Virgil*, nothing is worse than *Servius's* Remark, which authorizes Mr. D. and which he himself thus translates: (p. 443.) “*Virgil*, with much Reason and Decency, causes philosophical Songs to be sung at the Feast of *Dido*, who was yet chaste; and on the contrary, among Nymphs, where there were none but Women, causes to be sung the Amours of *Mars*, and *Vulcan's* Nets.” This is as much as to say, that according to *Servius* and Mr. D. Women, when alone, may with much Reason and Decency divert themselves with the most filthy and immodest Relations, after the manner of the *Phæaces*, the Gods also participating of the Crimes of Men.

After all, I am surpriz'd that F. *Bossu* and Mr. D. in the particular Example of the Adultery of *Mars* and *Venus*, should forget the most plausible Justification that could be alledg'd; viz. That *Mars* and *Venus* are inferior Deities, destin'd by *Homer* to represent Vices, and against whom *Minerva*, or the Wisdom of God, causes *Diomedes* to fight, in the 5th of the *Iliad*. Also the chief Reproach that can be brought

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brought against *Homer* for this Passage in the *Odyſſey*, is, that the Painting is really obscene. Now according to the Rules of civil Decorum, to which I adhere in this Place, one may very usefully represent in Poems all the Passions and Vices, except that of Obscenity, which ought never to be describ'd openly, what moral Intention soever may be alledg'd; there are some reverend Authors who say that we may boldly and in Front attack other Vices, but that we ought never to engage with this but in flying. In short, with respect to Wantonness and Impurity, Paintings seduce more than Morality corrects, and even the Representation of them is lewd. Thus as *the most impure Love modestly express'd*, may be permitted, according to the ancient Testimony of Mr. B. (*Art of Poet.* Cant. 4.) Actions even allowable among married Persons, may give Occasion to very wanton and lascivious Paintings, and consequently not to be suffer'd. Nevertheless, when *Homer* wou'd speak of Love, whether lawful or unlawful, he has always made lascivious and obscene Descriptions, as in the 3d B. of the *Iliad*, where *Venus* finds *Paris* and *Helen* together; and in the 14th, where *Juno* seduces *Jupiter* by the Girdle of *Venus*. It con-



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tributes very little then to *Homer's* Honour, that he has not defiled his Poem with dangerous Niceties, for which Mr. *D.* commends him, (*Pref. p. 5*) since he has polluted it with the most criminal Obscenities, either so in themselves, or by the Description that he makes of them. It was needless also what Madam *D.* observ'd to the Advantage of her Author, that *Agamemnon*, speaking of the Use to which he destin'd *Chriseis*, (*B. 1. p. 3.*) chuses a Term that rather signifies to take care of his Bed, than to partake of it. "He does this, says she, (*1. 280.*) to spare *Agamemnon* and his Hearers; and also out of Respect to the Goddess that inspires the Poet, because a Muse ought never to speak but with Decency and Modesty." What signifies this Precaution, taken only in one Place; if this Muse, according to the Remark and proper Terms of Madam *D.* (*3. 596.*) often says so freely, That such a Captive lay with such a Hero? An Expression much more inconsistent with Modesty and Decency, than that of partaking of his Bed, which they so much boast of his avoiding.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

*What intolerable Abuse is made of the Holy Scripture, when it is brought to justify Homer on this Occasion.*

SECT. I.

*Of some Ideas and Notions of Homer, that are pretended to be conform'd to those of the Holy Scriptures, particularly as to his Gods.*

AFTER having justified *Homer* for the impious and obscene Ideas he has given of the Gods; after having commended him for them; their highest Instance of Partiality, is next to sanctify them by the Example of holy Writ. The new Admirers of this Poet have attack'd, if we may so say, the Liberty of Learning, and wou'd perplex humane Sentiments with Matters altogether prophane, by laying down to us, as so many Articles of Faith, *Homer's* pretended Beauties. It is in this View that *F. Bossu*, and after him Mr.

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and Madam D. have said, that Criticks expos'd the sacred Authors to the Railleries of Libertines and Atheists, upon the Account of the Conformity of *Homer's* Ideas to those of the Holy Scriptures: But without alledging the learned and pious Persons, that these unworthy Comparisons have offended, Libertines and Atheists would never have thought of themselves of such Comparisons, had they known the infinite Difference that there is between the Holy Scriptures and *Homer*, as to the Ground of Things: We have before made this apparent in several particular Passages, and we shall here discover it more fully.

Father *Bossu* had not intimated this pretended Conformity of *Homer* with the Holy Scripture, but in a wild and wandring Proposition; and it is uncertain how far he wou'd carry it: Even Mr. D. has not positively justified *Homer* by the holy Scripture in any vicious Particular, but in the Fiction of the deceitful God of Dreams, which we have elsewhere discuss'd: But Madam D. has made her Commentary almost a perpetual Parallel between the *Iliad* and the Holy Books. I am sensible how right her Intentions are, and I know better than any other the Innocence of her



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her Admiration for *Homer*; but indeed 'tis chiefly she that has carry'd this Admiration to this third Degree, and last Excess, which I oppose. I observe also, that never any Recourse is made to Vindications taken from the Holy Scripture, but when all other are wanting: This is so improper in itself, that they never rely upon it, but when they see themselves confounded with the Horror of the Things presented in *Homer's* Text. They draw from History and Fable, from Nature, from Allegory, from Reason and Sophistry, all that can be brought to save and defend *Homer*; the Holy Scriptures are never burden'd, but with what is depriv'd of all human Excuse, and which is diametrically opposite to the first Impressions of Nature, and to the most simple Lights of Reason concerning the Divinity. Upon Occasion, for Example, of *Jupiter* being charm'd and seduc'd by the Girdle of *Venus*, which *Juno* borrow'd, Madam D. immediately employs the Morality of *Eustathius*, according to which *Homer* here teaches us,  
" That we ought to shun Voluptuous-  
" ness, and resist Women; who are ne-  
" ver more dangerous even to their  
" Husbands, than when they seek to  
" delight them with their Charms; for,  
" says

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“ says she, what ought not Men to fear,  
 “ since *Jupiter* himself could not pre-  
 “ vent being deceived?” (2. 581.) But  
 as we immediately perceive the Incon-  
 gruity of a Moral laid down at the Ex-  
 pence of the supreme God, whose Sleep,  
 even according to a Remark of *Madam*  
*D.* upon this same Subject (2. 586.)  
 ought to be but voluntary; and who,  
 according to *Homer's* Fiction, slept so  
 unwillingly, that at his waking he falls  
 into a furious Rage with *Juno*, (*B.* 15.  
*p.* 345.) who had surpriz'd him; they  
 have at last Recourse to the Holy Scrip-  
 ture to authorize this Sleep of Seduc-  
 tion and Effeminacy. “ *Homer*, say  
 “ they, (2. 586.) has follow'd good  
 “ Guides: In the holy Prophets it is  
 “ often said, that *God* awoke, that *God*  
 “ slept.” I here think it necessary to  
 repeat the like Applications, to make  
 the Authors of them blush.

In the 24th B. of the *Iliad* we find a  
 most horrible Precept of Obscenity. It  
 is not a dishonest Man that proposes it,  
 nor a soft and effeminate People that cause  
 it to be sung before them; it is a God-  
 des, otherways reverend and modest,  
*viz. Thetis*, who says to *Achilles*, “ My  
 “ Son, how long will you, overwhelm'd  
 “ with Tears and Sorrow, torment your  
 “ Heart?”

upon HOMER's Iliad. 203

"Heart?" I leave Madam D. to quote the Text.

Μεμνημενὸν ὕδ' ἐπὶ σίτου  
Οὐτ' εὖν'ες, ἀγαθὸν δ' ὃ γυναικί περ ἐν φιλότιμῳ  
Μίσγεσθαι. Ω. 129.

*Memor neque cibi prorsus neque cubilis,  
Bonum vero mulieri in amore misceri.*

I shan't exactly translate this *Greek* or *Latin*; I shall only say, that *Thetis* invites *Achilles*, in the most significant Terms, to comfort and divert himself with the Pleasures of the Table, and Women. This is so gross, that Madam D. has entirely suppress'd the Pleasures of the Table, and has very properly disguis'd the Remainder under the Word Love. "Nothing but Love, continues she in her Translation, can divert your Grief; for, alas! you have but a little Time to live." This is the Motive which has been turn'd and wind-ed so many different Ways by *Anacreon*, *Horace*, and all the prophane Poets. Mr. D. writes in the Life of *Plato*, (p. 42.) "That this Philosopher, in his Youth, courted the Favour and Esteem of his Mistress *Xantippe*, in very pressing Terms; and by those fine  
Reasons,



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“ Reasons, that are since become the  
 “ Common-Places of Burlesque Morali-  
 “ ty, that now reigns upon one of those  
 “ Theatres, whence it insensibly slides  
 “ into Cities and Houses ; That Beauty  
 “ is a Flower that quickly vanishes ;  
 “ That if we don’t haste to love, we  
 “ vainly lose our Youth ; and That old  
 “ Age comes on a-pace, to rob us of  
 “ all our Pleasures and Delights.” But  
 Mr. D. might as well have advertis’d  
 his Readers, that before long, there  
 would be made publick in Cities and  
 Houses, *Homer’s Iliad* in *French*, where  
 we shou’d see not a Common-Place, but  
 the Source and Principle of all Bur-  
 lesque Morality ; and if we consult the  
 Original, we shou’d find, that as our  
 Theatre explains this Morality in ho-  
 nest Terms and Expressions, *Homer* pre-  
 sents the most open Vice and Obscen-  
 ities, and formally recommends the most  
 shameful Actions. Madam D. immediat-  
 ly hereupon alledges *Dionysius Halicarnas-  
 seus* and *Plutarch*, (3. 595.) According to  
*Dionysius Halicarnasseus*, who has made,  
*says she*, such judicious Reflections upon  
 the Art of *Homer*, *Thetis* does not give an  
 Advice to her Son, that appears so inde-  
 cent and unbecoming a Mother, as to en-  
 gage him to plunge himself in Vice and

upon HOMER's Iliad. 205

Voluptuousness; on the contrary, according to the Text of this Critick, the Absurdity of which Madam D. disguises in her Translation, it is to turn him from it, *ὅτι ἔχρησεν αὐτὸν τρυφῇ* Art. Rhet. C. 9. "and to put him in Mind of his former Love to *Briseis*, and of the singular Favour *Jupiter* bestow'd on him, "by inflicting so many Evils on the *Grecians* on his Account." *Plutarch*, quoted also by Madam D. shews another Art in *Homer*; viz. "His having put in so clear a Light the Wisdom of his Hero, "who being in love with *Briseis*, and "knowing that the End of his Life "drew near, makes nevertheless so little haste to enjoy the Pleasures that "his Mother thought herself oblig'd to "invite him to. I acknowledge, says Madam D. that these Remarks of *Dionysius Halicarnassens*, and *Plutarch*, are "very proper to soften and diminish the "Indecency that appears, at first Sight, "in the Advice of *Thetis*."

*Dionysius Halicarnassens*, indeed, reasons like a *Greek* Rhetorician and Sophister, when he maintains an obscene Council and Advice to be at the same Time a Precept of Continence, an Invitation to Love, and a Commemoration of *Jupiter's* Favours; and *Plutarch* diminishes

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minishes no less the Indecency of *Thetis*' Council, since on the contrary he is of Opinion, that it seems to exalt the Wisdom of *Achilles*, and that *Homer* sacrifices the Honour of a Goddess to the Wisdom of a Madman. " But indeed, " on the contrary, continues Madam D. " if in *Homer*'s Time they had had the " same Notion of these criminal Passi- " ons, and of that infamous Commerce, " that we have now, and which was en- " tertain'd in the following Ages of the " *Pagans*, who were more enlighten'd, " all these Reflections wou'd be too " weak to excuse them. We must then " have recourse to the Manners and Cu- " stoms of those Ages, *adds she*; and " simply affirm, That in former Times " this kind of Commerce with Captives " was permitted, and even as lawful as " Marriage itself. Had this been other- " wise, how cou'd a Poet, whose chief " Business ought to be to reform the " Manners of Men, dare to say, That " such a Captive lay with such a Hero?" This is undoubtedly the only Conse- quence that can be drawn from all these Passages in *Homer*, the *Greeks* thought it no Crime to have Commerce with Captives; but this does not hinder, but that *Homer*, by making this Practice a Precept,



*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 207

Precept, that he puts into the Mouth of a Goddess, has committed a considerable Crime against Morality, even with Respect to the *Pagans*, since he has offended them all, and has even made them acknowledge, who before justified him with the utmost Zeal and Warmth, that this Passage appears to have something very indecent: In short, tho' the *Pagans* did not look upon all the Actions that Religion condemns as Crimes, Incontinence has ever been thought a great Vice; and the Advice even of Things they esteem'd most lawful in this Matter, always appear'd unworthy a grave and serious Person. Thus, as nothing can be made of the preceding Apologies, Recourse is immediately made to the Holy Scripture, to save, if possible, an Infamy that all Decorum and Morality had condemn'd. "*Homer* said this, pursues "*Madam D.* from the Example of the "*Holy Scripture*, which says, that "*Sarah* gave to *Abraham* her *Servant Hagar*; "*and as it relates that Abimelech* excused his taking away *Sarah*, whom he "*thought Abraham's* Sister, and yet a "*Virgin*, by saying that *he had done it* "*in the Simplicity of his Heart, and in* "*the Innocency of his Hands.*" The Example of *Abimelech* has nothing to do with

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with the present Subject, since the Holy Scripture does not inform us whether he wou'd marry *Sarah*; and that, in fine, God wou'd not permit him to touch her.\* But as to *Abraham*; Divinity, to which Madam D. obliges me here to have recourse, teaches us two Things, which renders his Case infinitely different from that of *Achilles*: The one, that Polygamy being then authorised by Custom, and tolerated by God himself, *Agar* was really *Abraham's* Wife; and the other, that this holy Patriarch determin'd to marry this Slave, from no other Motive than that of having Children, upon whom the Promises of God might alight. Now, with Reference to the first Article, the Slaves with whom the *Grecian* Princes had Commerce in the *Iliad*, were not their Wives; since *Briseis* (*B. 19. p. 167.*) said, as she wept over the Body of *Patroclus*, "You promis'd to procure my Marriage with *Achilles*." With respect to the second Article, no one can bear the Comparison of *Homer's* Heroes with the most holy of the Patriarchs; of whom *St. Augustin* has said, † that in

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\* *Gen* xx. 6.

† *Aug. de bono conjugali, c. 10, ii.*

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the Plurality of Wives, he always preserv'd a Disposition to Continence, which renders him comparable to the Virgin-Apostle; and indeed, how remote was *Homer* from this Knowledge, when he counsell'd *Achilles* to make use of a Concubine to comfort him? A Motive by which *Abraham* wou'd not have made use even of *Sarah*, knowing well that this Consolation is not in the Number of Motives by which we make use of Marriage, according to the true Design of that State, and the Perfection which agrees with it.

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SECT. II.

*Of some Histories and Facts, which 'tis pretended Homer borrow'd from the Old Testament.*

I Am not ignorant, that many learned Criticks refer to the wonderful Events related in the Sacred Books, as the Origin of many Fables of Paganism. I have no Thoughts of attacking this System; and tho', without going up so high as this Source, the ancient Mythologists have found, in the single Histories of *Egypt* and *Greece*, or in Natural Philosophy, so far as they

P                      knew



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knew it, a probable Foundation of most of the Fictions of the Poets; I accept, with Respect even to *Homer*, the Opinion of those learned Criticks I have mention'd, and from thence draw many stronger Exceptions against them; for, after all, if *Homer* had drawn his Notions and Ideas from the Fictions that were before his Time only, I shou'd be much less surpriz'd at their Impiety and Extravagance; but if he ever read the first Books of the Old Testament, or that he had any way known the Truths reveal'd to the *Jews*, he must have had a strange sort of Mind and Genius, to corrupt, after so horrible and pernicious a Manner, what is most pure and edifying in the World. The most noted Example we have of this Corruption, is the Fiction of *Ate*, which is found in the Discourse of *Agamemnon* in the 19th B. Madam D. says upon this Occasion, (3. 492.) "The Ancients  
 " knew then that there was a Dæmon  
 " created by God, and entirely employ'd to do Evil." And further, (p. 494.) "The Pagans knew that a Dæmon of Discord and Malediction was  
 " in Heaven, and that he was thrown  
 " headlong down into the Earth; which  
 " agrees perfectly well with the Holy  
 " History."

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"History." But in consulting *Homer's* Text, (p. 154, 155. of the 19th B.) I see that *Ate* is the Daughter of *Jupiter*; a Circumstance which the Poet took Care not to omit in the View he had of rendring the Gods Authors of all the Crimes and Misfortunes of Men. Now, does the Holy Scripture inform us that the Devil was the Son of God? But further, Madam D. need not tell us in so solemn a Manner, as to confirm it with an Oath, *that the Devil was created by God himself*; our Catechism teaches us, that the Devil did not proceed thus from the Hands of God, and that God did not create him in the State represented to us by this Term: In short, God cou'd not produce any thing either within or without himself, that was bad; and not only the Son, the essential Image of the Father, possesses all his Goodness, but even after having form'd all Creatures, God saw that they were good; *Viditque Deus cuncta quæ fecerat, & erant valde bona*, Gen. i. It is then abusing a very great Applause to say, as Madam D. (3. 494.) "That *Homer* gives an authentick Testimony of the Truth of History, concerning an Angel precipitated from Heaven; to which she adds, that this

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“ Testimony is so much more remarkable, as it was deliver’d above a hundred Years before the Prophet *Isaiah* spoke of the Fall of *Lucifer*; for can any doubt, continues she, that this Idea was not drawn from Truth itself?” But first, a Poet is incapable of giving a Testimony of the Truth of any History, which one ought to know by other Means, in order to disentangle it from the Fables in which it is wrap’d. Thus his Testimony is so far from being authentick, that it is of no Weight; as a profess’d Lyar does not deserve to be believ’d even when he speaks Truth. 2dly, the Fact is not of that Nature, as to admit of the Testimony of *Homer*, or any other prophane Author; it is a supernatural and invisible Fact, and consequently out of the Reach of their Testimony. *Xenophon*, for Example, in the 7th B. of his *Cyropedia*, bears Witness of the Accomplishment of the Prophecy which *Daniel* had made to *Balthazer*, concerning the approaching Death of that Prince: This is to be admitted, because this prophane Historian relates from the Accounts he had of it, the Manner in which the Officers of *Cyrus* enter’d into *Babylon*, and came to murder the King in the Night, as he revell’d

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upon HOMER's Iliad. 213

at his Feasts, conformably to what we read in the Prophet : But this is a natural and visible Fact, of which *Xenophon*, or the Authors of his Memoirs, were capable and competent Witnesses ; and this Conformity of the two Monuments might serve to prove to Infidels or Hereticks, the Authority of the Book of *Daniel*. We often find also in supernatural Facts a Visibilty, which might admit of the Testimony of a prophane Writer ; for Example, in looking upon as legitimate the Passage in *Josephus* the Historian, concerning *Jesus Christ* ; thereby this Historian bears a true Witness to the Miracles of the Saviour of this World, because being suppos'd to know them otherwise than from the Gospel, what he says of them shews, that the Memory of these Miracles was very fresh in *Judea* ; and this may contribute in a great Measure to make the Pagans acknowledge the Truth of the Evangelical History. But the Fall of *Lucifer* is an invisible Fact, that can receive no Testimony but from God himself, or those to whom God hath revealed it. Thus, instead of honouring of *Homer*, upon the Account of the Antiquity of his Testimony before that of *Isaiah*, by Expressions that almost insinuate the

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Poet's having had some Revelation of the Fall of *Lucifer*, before the Prophet; all we can say is, that tho' the Passage of *Isaiah* wherein this Fall is mentioned, had not yet appear'd, an authentick Tradition had convey'd this Fact to the *Jews*, and that from among them it proceeded to the *Gentiles*, who corrupted it according to their wonted Custom, by transforming it into the Fable of *Ate*, such as *Homer* relates it. Hence proceeds also the Falsity of *Homer's* having drawn the History of *Ate* from Truth itself; either because it is different from the true History in the most grave and serious Circumstances, or because he repeats it himself but after the People, and that he puts it in the Mouth of *Agamemnon*, as an old Story before known to all those that heard it. Thirdly and lastly, *Homer* in all Appearance gave as little Credit to this History, as to all the others he relates concerning the Gods. *Plutarch* at least advertises us, \* to look upon them, for the most part, as Fictions, purposely contriv'd and imagin'd by the Poets, to amuse their Readers: And hereupon it is pleasant to observe the Care and Di-

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\* *Manner of Reading the Poets.*

upon HOMER's Iliad. 215

ligence Madam D. takes to say continually in her Remarks, *Homer* knew such and such a Truth, about Things which he himself would acknowledge, he made use of but as Fables : For tho' I shou'd find in his Poems the Wonders and Miracles of the Old Testament, transferr'd Word for Word, without any Alteration, I shou'd nevertheless be convinc'd that he had taken them there, as in the Archives of the *Egyptian* Priests, without knowing the Difference he ought to put between these two sorts of Monuments.

But whether *Homer* believ'd or not the Fall of *Ate*, he was very much in the wrong to make use of a Story in his Poem, which carries along with it a Contradiction not to be explain'd. Quarrels and Discords reign among the Gods throughout the whole *Iliad*. In the first B. *Vulcan* being Witness of the Quarrel between *Jupiter* and *Juno*, tells them, (p. 38.) " These Things are indeed very unfortunate, and our Misfortunes are very insupportable ; if upon Account of poor miserable Mortals, you do nothing but quarrel and jangle, and put all the Heavens in Disorder ; we shall be no longer able to taste the Pleasures of our Feasts,



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“ and enjoy the Delights of Heaven,  
 “ since Discord and Division reigns even  
 “ among the Gods.” Hereupon Madam  
*D.* makes a Remark as judicious as the  
 Text : “ What Fear and Dread, says  
 “ she, (1. 325.) ought not Men to have  
 “ for Quarrels and Discord, since these  
 “ unhappy Jangles and Contentions,  
 “ creeping in among the Gods, trou-  
 “ ble and destroy all their Felicity,  
 “ and even prevent their Enjoyment of  
 “ Heaven? This is a very important  
 “ Point of Morality, and the whole  
 “ Subject of *Homer’s Iliads* offers to us  
 “ many Repetitions, that we may be  
 “ the more struck and affected.” We  
 are indeed infinitely obliged to *Homer*,  
 for having defam’d his Gods for our  
 Benefit and Instruction ; he is still more  
 instructive in the 21st B. where they  
 actually pull one another by the Hair,  
 and proceed to Cuffs and Blows. We  
 have sufficiently spoken of this in the  
 Chapter of *Allegories* : It here suffices  
 to observe, that the Poet says formally  
 upon this Occasion, (*B. 21. p. 232.*)  
 “ That Discord, which, according to  
 “ him, reigned no longer in Heaven,  
 “ kindled the Battle between the Gods.”  
 The Fall or Absence of *Ate*, seems to  
 render these Battles absurd, or to be-  
 come

upon HOMER's Iliad. 217

come itself absurd, from its Contradiction to them; but, according to a Remark which Madam D. borrows from *Eustathius*, (3. 494.) “ *Homer*, by the  
“ History of *Ate*, very artfully advises  
“ his Readers not to give Credit to the  
“ Fable which makes Discord reign  
“ in Heaven among the Gods, but to  
“ give it an allegorical Sense; for he  
“ assures us, that she appear'd no longer  
“ in the Habitation of the Immortals,  
“ since the Day she was precipitated  
“ thence.” I should be curious to know  
from what Motive the Pagan Readers  
shou'd be inclin'd to believe the Fall of  
*Ate* more true than the Combats between  
the Gods, instead of believing the Combats  
of the Gods more true than the Fall  
of *Ate*. This is very decisive, to oppose  
one Fable with another. But besides,  
tho' a Poet does not give himself out  
to be a faithful Historian, it is nevertheless  
ridiculous to be the Occasion  
himself of his own Destruction, by  
advising his Readers to give no Credit  
to any thing he says: On the contrary,  
his Art consists in rendring his Fictions  
so agreeable and probable, as to engage  
us to look upon them as true, or at least  
to wish they were so. In another Place,  
(3. 607.) Madam D. boasts

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boasts of *Homer's* Judgment, "in giving  
 " so great an Air of Truth to his Ficti-  
 " ons, and Confirmation to his Mira-  
 " cles." To consider every thing, it  
 was not at all necessary to introduce  
 the Dæmon *Discord* in Heaven, to set  
 the Gods at Variance; for there was  
 no one among them that was not ca-  
 pable of putting all Heaven in Disorder;  
*Diana* says thus of *Juno*, (B. 21. 241.)  
*Juno* of *Mars*, (B. 5. 225.) *Mars* of *Min-*  
*erva*, (B. 5. 233.) and *Jupiter* himself  
 (B. 21. 232.) "perceives his Heart  
 " leap for Joy when he sees the Gods  
 " divided, marching in Combat against  
 " one another."

Notwithstanding Madam D. who  
 knows that *Homer* advises us to give no  
 Credit to the Fable that makes *Discord*  
 reign among the Gods, and in the Ha-  
 bitation of the immortal Deities, whence  
 she had before been thrown headlong,  
 her self makes no Scruple of making  
 her reign in Heaven amongst the holy  
 Angels, since the Fall of *Lucifer*: Thus  
 she explains her self in her Preface (p.  
 15, 16.) "With Respect to the Leagues  
 " and Combats of the Gods, we may  
 " affirm *Homer* to be yet secure from  
 " our Censures. The Holy Scripture  
 " offers us many Examples that deserve  
 " our



upon HOMER's Iliad. 219

“ our Respect and Veneration. The  
“ Prophet *Daniel* shews us the Combat  
“ of Angels with others. In the 10th  
“ Chapter, the Angel *Gabriel*, who pro-  
“ tected *Greece*, fought 21 Days with  
“ the Angel that protected *Persia*, and  
“ the Angel *Michael*, who was the Pro-  
“ tector of the *Jews*, came to his Assist-  
“ ance. In the 12th Chapter the two  
“ former Angels engaged again upon  
“ the Banks of the River *Tiber*, as if  
“ they wou'd dispute the Possession of  
“ of it. Concerning this, I see, *adds she*,  
“ that the learn'd *Grotius* has remark'd,  
“ that in the first Times, that is to say  
“ under the Law, of the Angels that  
“ presided over the Nations; some fa-  
“ vour'd the *Persians*, and others the  
“ *Grecians*; and that the Coming of our  
“ Saviour dissipated this Spirit of Dis-  
“ sention, if I may be permitted to make  
“ Use of that Term: *Omnes aliarum na-*  
“ *tionum præsides Angeli aut Persis fave-*  
“ *bant, aut Græcis: Talia inter Angelos*  
“ *studia extinxit Christus.*” Here I dare  
immediately advance, that the Explica-  
tion of *Grotius* is not allow'd of in the  
Church. In effect, it is absolutely con-  
trary to the System of the Divinity of  
Angels: For the common Opinion being,  
that these happy Spirits were confirm'd  
in

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in Grace, immediately after the Fall of *Lucifer*; there was nothing in them to reform at the Coming of our Lord. But among the best Interpreters of the holy Scripture, some have believ'd that these Angels, which are call'd, in *Daniel*, the Princes of the *Pagan Nations*, as the *Greeks* and *Persians*, were Dæmons, which the holy Scripture elsewhere calls the Princes, the Powers and Rulers of the World. (*Epist. to the Ephes. vi. 12.*) and that it was against these Dæmons that the good Angels fought, who were the Protectors of the *Jews*; for to mention it by the by, *St. Gabriel* was not the Protector of the *Grecians*, as *Madam D.* says, since on the contrary he is the Protector of the *Jews* jointly with *St. Michael*; and that at the End of the 10th Chapter, he says himself, that he had fought the Protector of the *Greeks*. There has ever been had but little regard to this first Interpretation; and the most common Opinion is, \* That these Princes of the *Greeks* and *Persians* were good Angels, as well as those to whom God had committed the Care of the *Jews*: But notwithstanding the Term of Fighting, which the holy Scripture makes use

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\* See *Pererius on Daniel.*

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of, in speaking of the Tutelary Angels of these different Nations, *Theodoret* and *St. Gregory* advise us not to think there was any Dissention, much less any Battle in Heaven. This Term signifies nothing else but the Exposition which the Angels make to God, or the different Interests of the People they take Care of; because, according to the Sentiment of Divines, Angels not being always acquainted with the Decrees of God about particular Things, may require, with good Intention, for one Side or the other, Things different from one another, till the Decrees of God are revealed. The Interpreters have enquir'd, what cou'd have been the Motives that induc'd the Guardian Angels of the *Greeks* and *Persians*, to oppose the Return of the *Jews*, which *St. Michael* and *St. Gabriel* desir'd? And they answer, that without hurting the true Interest of the *Jews*, who are always wiser in Adversity than Prosperity, these Angels desir'd that the *Jews*, being sown among the idolatrous Nations, should therein spread the Knowledge of the True God I bring these Reasons to shew how far the Spirit, which Ecclesiastical Authors seek and find in the holy Scripture, for the Edification of the Faithful, is different from that which Madam

D.



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*D.* attributes to them, to render them conformable to *Homer*.

We shan't much insist upon other Passages in *Homer*, which *Madam D.* refers to certain Facts contain'd in holy Scripture; whose Relation is nevertheless so imperceptible, that none but *Madam D.* can see it. Under this Head I place this Passage in the 21st B. (p. 241.) "As  
" the Flames of a City consum'd by  
" Fire, which the Wrath of the Gods  
" had cast down, rise up even to the  
" Clouds." Hereupon *Madam D.* says, (3. 54.) "*Homer* knew this great Truth,  
" that God sometimes punishes whole  
" Cities, by darting down upon them  
" his revengeful Fires." This Praise is affected, even in the Style; for the Expression of great Truth is seldom apply'd to historical Facts, and its most common Use is in Propositions of Doctrines of Morality. It was very necessary, indeed, to disguise the Fact by a Maxim; this is likewise Affectation, for one seldom makes a general Proposition of a single Fact, as in the Case of the Fires that fell from Heaven to punish *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*. Upon another Passage, where *Jupiter* thinks of conveying *Sarpedon* into *Lycia*, to deliver him from the Death that threaten'd him in the Fields of *Troy*. (B. 16. 28.)

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16. 28.) Madam D. says, " Even the  
" *Pagans* were sensible of God's Power  
" to transport a Man, all of a sudden,  
" into a distant Country." There is no  
need of great Penetration of Mind to  
comprehend, that a Being far superiour  
to Man is capable of this Action; and  
the *Pagans* might very well imagine this,  
without having any Knowledge of the  
True God, or any Fact contain'd in the  
holy Scriptures; especially considering,  
that the History of *Habakkuk*, which Ma-  
dam D. no doubt had in View, being of  
later Date than *Homer*, cou'd not have  
been known to him even by Tradition.  
But I own that I am quite lost in a  
Remark in the 3d Vol. p. 424. where  
upon Occasion of a Shower of Blood  
that fell at the Death of this same *Sarpe-  
don*, Son of *Jupiter*, begot in Adultery,  
Madam D. says, "*Homer* knew that at  
" the Death of *Jupiter's* Son, all Na-  
" ture must suffer, and that his Death  
" must be lamented in Tears of Blood."  
Nevertheless, I had rather let this Pas-  
sage alone, than unhappily to impute to  
Madam D. the Allusion which I think  
discernable.

Never was there any Poet more libe-  
ral than *Homer* of the Assistance of the  
Gods: The Inclination he had for a  
Wonder

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Wonder little sought after, and often repeated, has not permitted him to distinguish hard and difficult Enterprizes from those which are not so; and he does not consider whether the Conjunction be worthy, according to *Horace's* Precept, of the God he introduces. Madam *D.* turns all this very piously, finds therein the most nice and ingenuous Conceits. “*Homer*, says she, (p. 295.) was acquainted with this Truth, that Angels  
“ and other Spirits manifest themselves  
“ to Men, and that God sends them to  
“ the Assistance of those whom he wou’d  
“ deliver from any Peril or Danger.  
“ God suffers not himself to be seen,  
“ says she, in the same Page, but to those  
“ whom he wou’d enlighten by his Presence.” But as these Propositions, which are Principles in Madam *D.’s* Mind, are no ways so in *Homer’s*, he contradicts them with the first Wind that turns him to another Side. Thus *Mercury* being sent by *Jupiter* to *Priam*, in the 24th B. leaves him at the Entrance of *Achilles’s* Tent, telling him, (p. 378.)  
“ That it is not consistent with the Majesty of the Gods to show themselves  
“ to Men, nor to appear openly to favour  
“ and protect Mortals.” That is to say, that *Homer’s* Gods never openly afford  
their



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their Assistance to Men, but to make them massacre one another; and that they hide themselves when they ought to give them some Marks of their Favour and Kindness. Thus this continual Assistance of the Gods, which in another Poet would have been a Mark of Religion, is become in *Homer* a Proof of Impiety.

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SECT. III.

*That the Conformity that is found in some Particulars between the Stile of Homer and that of the Holy Scriptures, can in no way justify the Faults of his Composition and Stile.*

ALTHO' the Argument of this *Section* don't relate to the Gods, yet we add it to finish what concerns the Comparifon between *Homer* and the holy Scriptures. 'Tis certain that the Proximity of Times and Climates, has put some Conformity as to Stile between *Homer* and our sacred Writers: Provided this Refemblance is not carried too far, and Prejudice and Prevention don't make us find it every where, as it hap-  
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pen'd to the Author *Homerus Hébräï-  
sans*; it may be curious, with refe-  
rence to Criticism, to compare the first  
and most ancient Monument of prophane  
Antiquity, with the yet more ancient  
Monuments of our own Religion. But  
I intend to prove here, that the Exam-  
ple of the Holy Scriptures don't autho-  
rize any Thing, which Reason and the  
true Rules of Eloquence and Poetry  
shew to be Faults in *Homer*. For, first,  
the Holy Scriptures were not given us  
as a Model of Eloquence and Poetry;  
and it were to prophane them to pretend  
to find Rules there for the Composition of  
our Harangues and Poems, instead of Ar-  
ticles of Faith, and Rules of Morality.  
The new Philosophers have told us, that  
we must not be determin'd by Expressi-  
ons of the Holy Scriptures, in Subjects  
of Natural Philosophy; because their  
Design being only to instruct us in Mat-  
ters of Religion and Morality, they in  
other Things, relating to the System of  
Nature, adapted themselves to the vul-  
gar Opinions, of which they never speak  
but occasionally, without any Design  
to inform or instruct us in those Sub-  
jects. All Men perhaps have not yet  
allow'd, or permitted this Distinction;  
but there are none who don't agree that  
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the Rules of fine Stile, which prophane Authors are obliged to observe, are often neglected in the Holy Scriptures. This is what occasioned one of the learnedest Bishops *France* ever had, to express himself thus: *Mr. Heuet, Bishop of Avranches, in a Letter inserted among the Dissertations upon different Subjects of Religion and Philosophy, collected by Mr. Abbe Tilladet, Vol. 2. p. 31.* "The Elevation and Simplicity of the Sacred Writings, are not Marks by which we know they were dictated by the Holy Ghost, since *St. Augustine* esteem'd it indifferent whether the Language of the Holy Scriptures was polite or barbarous. Who knows not that *St. Paul* was ignorant of the Figures of Rhetorick, and was *imperitus Sermone*, or Rude in Speech; that *Moses* was no Master of Stile or Language; that the Prophet *Amos* was rustick and impolite; and that these holy Persons, tho' speaking different Languages, Stiles and Dialects, were yet all animated with the same Spirit? 'Tis to the same Purpose, that *F. la Brussel (B. 2. Art. 9. p. 283.)* has said, "Could not God, by equally inspiring *Isaiah* and *Amos*, accommodate himself to the Sublimity of the Genius of

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“ the former, and the Rusticity of  
 “ the latter, in the same Manner as  
 “ a great Master in Musick adjusts  
 “ his Wind or Breath to the good or  
 “ bad Disposition of the Instrument  
 “ he touches?” And at the End of  
 the same Article, “ It suffices to  
 “ believe, that the Authors of the  
 “ Sacred Books were all so directed  
 “ and inspired, that they could nei-  
 “ ther be deceived themselves, nor de-  
 “ ceive us, in whatever they commit-  
 “ ted to Writing, that has been re-  
 “ ceived into the Canon of the Holy  
 “ Scriptures: This is sufficient to esta-  
 “ blish their Authority upon a certain  
 “ and unshaken Foundation: For, how-  
 “ ever the Doctrine of Jesus Christ was  
 “ written and preach’d by the Apostles  
 “ in different Terms and Expressions,  
 “ Stiles and Dialects, according to their  
 “ different Genius and Capacities, ’tis  
 “ still the true and genuine Word of  
 “ God, notwithstanding this Difference  
 “ of Expression, which the Holy Ghost  
 “ left to their own Option and Choice.”  
 And indeed, is any one ignorant that the  
 Gospel of *St. Luke*, and the *Acts of the*  
*Apostles*, are wrote with more Purity and  
 Elegance, than any of the other Books  
 of the New Testament?

*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 229

I conclude from the preceding Authorities, that to cite a Phrase or Expression of the Holy Scriptures, is sometimes to cite the Phrase and Expression of an Author who wrote unpolitely, and who consequently can't be set up for an Example: This were to find the Model of a fine Stile, and good Taste, and just Writing, no longer amongst the *Greeks* and *Romans*, according to the universally and unanimously received System of the *Belles Lettres*, but among the *Jews* or the Eastern Nations. The only Thing we can conclude from a Phrase or Expression contained in the sacred Writings, is, that the Fact, or the Maxim included in such a Phrase or Expression, is an Article of Faith: But as to the Phrase it self, so long as it remains in the Holy Scriptures, I shall never censure it, because it would be rash and ridiculous to cavil with an inspired Author, merely as to Words and Phrases, when, without piquing upon Stile and Eloquence, he only designs to propose to me the most necessary and essential Truths of Religion. But when a prophane Author, who is proposed as a universal Model, shall use and employ the same Terms and Phrases, and especially when he shall so use them, as to shock and offend a-

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gainst all Reason and Decorum, I must look upon it as a ridiculous Piece of Superstition, to be hinder'd or forbid the Criticism or Examination of such Expressions, under Pretence that the same occur in the Sacred Writings, where they only present what may persuade us to the Practice of Wisdom, Justice and Truth. Upon this Principle, we shall be obliged to admire the *Alcoran*, because 'tis full of Expressions and Images taken from the Holy Scripture. To conclude, the holy Spirit is so far from requiring us to conform our Ideas of Composition and Stile to that of the Holy Scripture, that he, in infinite Condescension, was pleased to conform himself to the Stile received among the Sons of Men, according to the different Times and Ages in which he spoke to them, or reveal'd his Will or Laws, in order to make the greater and deeper Impression upon their Minds : For the Books of the Holy Scripture are far from being wrote and composed in one and the same Stile ; the Books of *Kings*, for Example, are writ in a very different Stile and Manner from the Book of *Genesis*, and the Book of *Maccabees*, which was compos'd by an Author who had some Knowledge and Commerce with the  
Greek



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Greek Writings, still more different from the Book of *Kings*. This last, tho' more polite and elegant than those who preceded him, yet makes the Reader Excuses and Apologies; which, according to the Principles of our Faith and Religion, can only relate to his Style. The Fathers and Doctors of the Church, who liv'd in different Ages, when Learning and the *Belles Lettres* did not flourish, or were extinct, have also, for the Advantage of their Cotemporaries as to Composition and Style, accommodated themselves to their Taste; as, in affecting Points, Allusions, and in producing numerous Testimonies and Citations from the old Philosophers; still correcting and improving all those Customs and Practices by the Excellence of their Instructions. But for the same Reason the pious and devout Authors of the last Ages have thought themselves obliged to treat this new and ancient Truth, or the same Doctrine which they found in the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, as in its true and genuine Source, after a Manner more conform and agreeable to the improv'd and rectify'd or more just and perfect Taste of the present Age.

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Yet tho' the inspir'd Authors did not commonly affect humane Eloquence, and that *St. Paul*, in particular, renounc'd the Sublime of the *Pagan* Orators; yet there occurs in the holy Scriptures a great Number of Passages which are truly eloquent and most sublime, judging even according to the Rules of humane Rhetorick; because several of those sacred Authors were in themselves very great Men, independently from the peculiar Inspiration of the holy Spirit; and also, because the most simple Men, being thoroughly possess'd with what they say, are capable of producing very sublime Expressions. Hence it has happen'd, that some prophane Authors have employ'd some Passages of the holy Scripture to very great Advantage, accompanying them with the other Figures and Beauties of Eloquence and Poetry, which most of those sacred Authors seldom used or affected.

To conclude: There are none of these Phrases or Passages of holy Writ, which are alledg'd to justify *Homer*, that are not infinitely finer and more beautiful in the holy Scripture than in the *Iliad*: As the Tryal of *Gideon* for Example, compar'd with that of *Agamemnon*; the terrible Refusal which God makes of out-ward

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ward and material Sacrifices, compar'd with the interested and mercenary Declaration of *Jupiter*, who requires no other Worship; and several other Examples of the same Nature already mention'd, or which shall hereafter be produc'd in the remaining Part of this Work.

*The End of the Third Part.*





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DISSERTATION  
UPON  
*HOMER's Iliad.*

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PART IV.

*A short Abridgment of the several  
Branches or Particulars of the  
ILIAD.*



WE will reduce all the Particulars of the *Iliad* to six Principal Heads, viz. the *Miraculous in Fictions*; *Battles*; *Discourses*; *Morals* and *Sentiments*, which we join together; *Comparisons*; and the *Style and Diction*. We will treat each of them with such Shortness, as is consistent with the entire Execution of our Design upon *Homer*.

CHAP.

## C H A P. I.

*Of the Miraculous appertaining to or included in Fictions.*

THE Word *Fiction* may be understood in general of all the fabulous Adventures that a Poet introduces in the Frame or Constitution of his Poem. If these Adventures succeed one after the other, without any other Connexion than that of their being so many different Obstacles to the final and principal Design of the Hero, the *Odyssey* might serve for the first Model: But we are not now concern'd with that second Poem of *Homer*, nor do we intend herein to prevent Madam D. If these Adventures are connected one to the other, and are included as it were one in the other, so as they appear to make but one, this is what we call Intrigue or Plot: The *Iliad* has neither Adventures, nor Plot or Intrigue. The Ancients, whether *Greeks* or *Latins*, were ignorant of this last Art, in which the *Spaniards* have excell'd and surpass'd, and which shines principally in their



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their Romances. Indeed, I wou'd not require such deep Intrigues in Epic Poetry, nor in Tragedy; where I think one ought not to seek other Events than such as may clearly unfold and unravel the moral End propos'd. Thus in the Poem of *Telemachus*, *Mentor* keeps the young Prince in a Place no longer than is requisite to exercise his Virtue, and teach him Experience, as the Author himself informs us.

The Fictions of modern Tragedies and Romances are still kept within the Bounds of ordinary Nature, without rising to the Miraculous, for which there are very good Reasons. But, without mentioning all the Fables and Stories in which the Fairies and Genii are introduc'd, we have Operas and other Pieces which depend upon the Machinery, whose proper Value is particularly founded upon the Miraculous or Marvellous. As to Epic Poetry, the Ancients and Moderns have equally made use of it herein. These Miracles consist in the Apparition or Interposition of Deities, and the Representation of Prodigies; and this is the Subject of the present Chapter.

With Reference to the Gods, there are two Rules to be observ'd: The one  
is,

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is, never to introduce them but on Occasions that deserve and require their Presence; and the other, to make them act nothing but what is worthy of 'em. These two Rules are equally transgress'd and violated throughout the *Iliad*; the Gods appear there so unnecessarily, and so indecently, that it is *Eustathius*' and *Madam Dacier*'s greatest Business and Difficulty, how to praise or apologize for *Homer* on this Head; but we have already said so much on *Homer*'s Gods and Deities, that the new View and Light in which we now consider them, will only be repeating Things in another Order or Method. But if *Homer* had observ'd the two preceding Rules, it had been needless for him to have us'd all that Art and Skill, as *Madam D.* supposes he does, in the Fiction where he introduces the Gods fighting with Men. This Art consists in supposing that the Heroes see the Gods. "*Homer*, says *Madam D.* (i. 147.) can't any longer be accus'd of Fable or Fiction, since the Heroes themselves own, that it was so; and in this he shew'd great Art and Skill." The Poet needs no Apology as to his Interposition of the Deities, considering the Thing absolutely: But if an Apology was  
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upon HOMER's Iliad. 239

was wanting, this Expedient of *Homer* were insufficient ; since in Reality the Heroes of a Poem neither see nor say any thing but what it pleases the Poet they shall. We discover here the trifling, vain and empty Reflections of the poor good Archbishop of *Theſſalonica*, (p. 536.) altho' Madam D. is not pleas'd to cite him.

As to Prodigies wrought by the Power and Presence of the Gods themselves, in which the Wonderful or Miraculous, strictly taken, properly consists ; they may seem to be above Precepts, and consequently superior or bid Defiance to all Criticism : But we may, perhaps, be convinc'd by the following Reflections, that there is nothing that can withdraw itself from under the Power, Jurisdiction, and Dominion of Reason ; which is the Rule and Measure that ought to direct, conduct and regulate Poetry, even in its highest Flights. *Aristotle*, \* and Mr. D. his Commentator after him, being sensible of the Need and Necessity *Homer* had of strain'd and far-fetch'd Apologies or Vindications, have advanc'd this sur-

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\* *Arist. Chap. 25. Mr. D. Rem. upon his Poet. p. 463.*

prising



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prising Principle, that the Wonderful or Miraculous in Epic Poetry may arrive even so far as to what is absurd and unreasonable. It is true, that *Aristotle*, who is always confus'd in his Notions and Ideas, ridiculously alledges for an Example of this wonderful Absurdity, *Hector* pursu'd by *Achilles*, giving a Sign to the *Greeks* not to discharge upon the *Trojan* Hero, that he alone might have the Glory of killing him : A very simple and natural Act ! Whereas Mr. D. much more reasonably than his Author, takes for an Example hereof the *Tripods* of *Vulcan* walking of themselves. However it is, this Principle, brought to vindicate and justify *Homer*, entirely ruins him, since they allow that he carries his Marvellous as far as Absurdity ; whereas the Practice of *Homer*, and Precept of *Aristotle*, ought only to have carry'd Fiction so far as the Wonderful or Marvellous : for we must never confound the common Course of Nature, which it is allow'd us to rise to and soar above in Epic Poetry, with Reason, whose Laws we are never to transgress.

Now to distinguish the Wonderful from the Unreasonable, we lay down this general Rule : The Wonderful or Marvel-

upon HOMER's *Iliad*. 241

Marvellous must always observe and follow the Thread of Nature; it may go beyond it, but it ought never to be inconsistent with it, nor contradict it. This Rule is authorized by the first Origin of all Fable and Mythology, where most of the Gods are only Bodies or natural Effects, transform'd into Persons and deify'd, to which they have given Attributes and Properties analogical or correspondent to the physical Beings they represent: For if Poetry is design'd to raise and charm the Imagination, and not to offend or shock it, it is easy and obvious to perceive, that we can't obtain the one, or prevent or avoid the other, but by the Rule propos'd: But the Application we shall now make hereof to several Fictions of the *Iliad*, will more clearly shew its Extent and Certainty.

*Homer* preparing the Combat in the 21st Book, where the Gods march one against another, says, that Heaven gave the Signal by sounding the Trumpet.

Ἀμφὶ δὲ σάλπιγξεν μέγαστοῦραν. φ 388.

Our Language, which admits of no Absurdities, would not suffer Madam D to translate this Verse literally; and she

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has therefore judiciously substituted the following Phrase, *Heaven gave the Signal for the Battle*, 232. The impertinent Commentator, that abounds so much in Trifles and vain Applications, I mean *Eustathius*, enlarges a long while upon this Passage; and Madam D. thinks her self oblig'd (3. 536.) to relate Part of his trifling Foolery. He readily owns, that this Expression of *Homer* includes nothing great, and that it wou'd have been better he had said that *the Heavens thunder'd*: But, adds he, the Expression of *Homer* is more proper for a Battle; as the Poet has said afterwards in the 20th B. upon Occasion of the Battle between the *Greeks* and *Trojans*, that *Jupiter thunder'd from the Height of Heaven*. *Eustathius* observes, "That *Homer* by this great Idea has  
 " heighten'd the first Battle, because  
 " less considerable; whereas in the  
 " Battle of the Gods, which from  
 " their Presence derives all its Majesty and Greatness, he thought it  
 " sufficient to say that Heaven sounded  
 " the Trumpet." If the Poet had chang'd the Place of these two Expressions, we should have prais'd him more to have adapted them to the Subject, even allowing that the fighting of  
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*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 243

the Gods were not in it self the most scandalous and ridiculous Thing in the World. However it is, Madam D. subscribing to *Eustathius*, concludes, "That  
" it is a Prodigy very agreeable to the  
" greater Poetry, to represent Heaven  
" sounding the Trumpet, as if Heaven  
" had a Mouth; whereas if he had simply said, that Heaven thunder'd, he  
" had said nothing extraordinary or surprising." But I affirm, that the Heavens neither having, nor being capable of having a Mouth, nor being in the Rank and Order of Animals, who are endow'd with Voice and Speech, our Rule condemns this sort of Marvellous, as not being agreeable to what is found in any Part of the System of Nature.

The Case is not the same with Reference to the Faculty of Speech given to Animals on certain Occasions; for first, in some very rare Circumstances, and upon very extraordinary Occasions, it may be allowable to make the most common Animals speak; but such as hear them shou'd consider and look upon this Event as a Prodigy that declares the Anger and Wrath of Heaven. This is *Lucian's* \* Decision, justified even by

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\* *In the Dream of the Cock.*

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the History of *Balaam's* Ass, which the Admirers of *Homer* very impertinently alledge in favour of him; and, to say so much by the bye, it were easy for me to shew, that the true Miracles of the Holy Scripture much better observe and agree with the Course of Nature mention'd in this Rule, than the vain Fictions of *Homer*. Secondly, I wou'd'nt wholly reject the Gift and Faculty of Speech in Horses of immortal Race, as those of *Achilles*, tho' *Lucian* has railled and ridicul'd *Homer* for using this Fiction: But, if I may venture a Conjecture, *Lucian* was shock'd in general, as all the rest of the World are, to find the *Iliad* full of reasonable Horses, who are still spoke to, talk'd and convers'd with, as so many Men; and through Inadvertency he has apply'd his Raillery to a particular Fact, which did'nt deserve it. Indeed, immortal Horses, distinguish'd by Speech, wou'd make a very noble Fiction, if *Homer* himself had not debas'd their Privilege, by being so lavish and prodigal in bestowing, if not the Faculty of Speech, yet at least that of Understanding, upon all the Horses of the Greek and Trojan Armies. *Hector* in the 8th B. (p. 46.) addresses to his Horses

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Horses an Exhortation of an entire Page in Length, in which are contain'd some very choice Things. "*Xanthus* and *Podargus*, and you *Æthon* and *Lampus*, now you have an Opportunity to reward me for all the Care that *Andromache*, the Daughter of magnanimous *Eetion*, has taken of you, by her furnishing you every Day, rather than my self, with Bread and Wine off my Table: How often has she left me to visit you?" There is perhaps no Reader, who upon this Occasion won't have Recourse to the Remarks of Madam D. in hopes of finding her here at least fairly give up her Author, in so absurd and monstrous a Passage; but they will soon be undeceiv'd by the following Encomium, (2. 420.) "There is here a hidden Beauty, which those that are not yet well acquainted with *Homer* will perhaps not presently discern: The Poet here draws the Character of a Princess, who, tenderly loving her Husband, took Care every Time he return'd from Battle, to go out and meet him; and who, ravish'd and transported to see him, ran immediately to his Horses, giving them Bread and Wine, in Testimony of her Gratitude and Acknowledgment that they



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“ had brought her Husband back.” Is it not very fine and pleasant to see a fond Wife eagerly run to caress the Horses, leaving the Person of her Husband cover’d with Blood and Dust, whilst he stood in so much Need of her Help and Assistance? This Assistance is express’d by a very fine Thought and Sentiment, which we find in the 17th B. (p. 70.) where the Poet causes *Jupiter*, mourning over *Hector*, to say, “ *Andromache* shall not see you after the Battle delivering into her Hands those fine and beautiful Arms of *Achilles*, which she wou’d have taken so much Pleasure to disarm you of.” It is apparent, from the Judgment we pass on this last Passage, that our own Manners and Customs don’t so powerfully nor absolutely govern us, with which they wou’d reproach us; for now ’tis no Part of the Province of the Wife of a General to undress and disarm him, yet we allow and own this last Thought and Sentiment of *Andromache* to be as natural, as we judge the first unnatural and absurd. Some of *Homer*’s Friends may excuse this Discourse of *Hector*, as they do several others, by the Rudeness and Barbarity of the first Ages; but Madam D. thinks this Apology

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pology a sort of Blasphemy; she would have us approve of *Homer* with all his Barbarity, Clownishness, and Rusticity, Improprieties, and Want of Decorum; and it will be none of her Fault, if we don't abolish all the Politeness and Decorum of our own Customs and Manners, to restore and establish his again.

*Antilochus*, in the Games in the 23d B. addresses also his Horses with a formal Exhortation, (p. 312.) and tho' the Poet, among other Things, makes him say, "What Shame is it for you, that a Mare should outrun Horses of your Reputation!" Yet I have not forgot that in the same Book, (p. 306.) *Nestor*, Father of *Antilochus*, had said to him, "Son, you have very heavy and dull Horses, endow'd but with small Force and Spirit." Here therefore are Horses contemptible enough, to which yet Discourses are address'd.

Madam D. says, (419.) "That Poetical Passion and Enthusiasm, is sufficient to justify all these Discourses, for, adds she, in such Cases, there is nothing to which one don't speak." It is true, that in Fury one speaks every Thing; but Fury and Passion absolutely exclude and prevent all long Speeches and Harangues; and it were even a Fault to make Men,

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in Passion, harangue other Men, in such long Discourses, so full of Reason and Argument, as here *Homer* makes Men address their Horses. Or if by Enthusiasm, Madam *D.* means that of the Poet; we know very well that the Poet should, generally speaking, preserve this Enthusiasm to himself, and when he is only speaking, without communicating it to his Persons; and even in the Supposition of immortal Horses that speak, I should not approve of that long Complaint that *Jupiter* makes over them in the 17th B. (p. 85.) for, indeed, *Jupiter* ought to carry himself as far above those Horses, which are immortal like himself, as Men are above Horses of the common and ordinary Race, subject to Mortality like themselves. Madam *D.* says upon this Occasion, (3. 44<sup>3</sup>.) "That *Homer* had well apprehended that the Goodness of God extends over all, to Animals as well as Men." Madam *D.* seems not well acquainted with the Theological Stile, which she cites in another Place, upon a like Subject, (2. 602.) for in that Stile, Providence, indeed, extends it self to Animals, which it nourishes, as it cloaths the Lillies of the Fields; but the Goodness of God is never applied but to Creatures designed for



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for a supernatural End, and capable of Reward or Punishment: *Numquid de bobus Cura est Deo?* 1 Cor. ix. 9.

Moreover, it appears by *Homer's* Text, that even the Horses of *Achilles* spoke but by Miracle, the Goddess *Juno* giving them an articulate Voice, (*B. 19. p. 174.*) which the Furies depriv'd them of a Moment after (*p. 175.*) This Passage of the Furies arises, as well as many others, from the mere Imagination of *Homer*, without any real Foundation; which can't consequently yield the least Pleasure to the Reader. This is what has induc'd *Eustathius*, cited by *Madam D.* (*3. p. 505.*) to say, "that the Poet would hereby intimate, that the Deprivation of the Voice, is something so sad and fatal, that none but Furies are capable of the cruel Imployment of taking it away." I can't think this so very unhappy a Thing for a Horse, to whom Speech is not natural; and who, according to *Madam D.* in the same Remark, "spoke but by a surprising Prodigy."

Our Rule will also allow and permit Words utter'd in a Place where no Person appears; because Sound being nothing else but Air convey'd in a certain Manner to our Ears, Beings invisible to  
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us may be judg'd capable of conveying it in this Manner, and making themselves understood. But if I should condemn, in the ancient Mythology, *Dodona's Grove*, and the Ship *Argo*, which spoke, I should still agree with *Lucian*,\* who, by a just Taste, and from a true Judgment, has criticis'd those two Fictions, whose Fault and Absurdity I have discover'd by my Principle. *Tasso* has made the Trees of his enchanted Forest to groan and speak; but he supposes these Trees to be possess'd by *Demons*; which justifies the Miracle. We may also in Poetry communicate some sort of Sensation to inanimate Bodies, provided the Sign they give hereof be agreeable to their Nature. We allow therefore *Virgil*, in his *Eclogues*, causing Laurel Trees, Tamarinds, and even the Rocks of frozen *Lycea*, to weep and lament.

*Illum etiam Lauri, etiam flevere Myricæ,  
—— Et gelidi fleverunt saxa Lycæi.*

Madam D. (3. 566.) quotes these two Passages to justify *Homer*, for making the Sands of the Sea and the Arms of

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\* *Dialogue of the Dream, or of the Cock.*

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the *Grecians* lament the Death of *Patroclus*; (B. 3. p. 287.) but the Case is a little different, for some Trees do naturally weep, and Water flows from the Rocks in the Spring Season; which never happens to the Sands, and yet much less to Arms and Weapons. Now a Shepherd full of his Grief and Passion, naturally enough applies the Sentiment he feels in his Soul, to this Effect of Nature. This Prepossession of him that speaks, even justifies Ideas that otherwise would stray from the Limits of my Rule; and it has been allow'd *Phædra* to say,

*Methinks these conscious Walls, these vaulted  
Roofs,  
Wait but th' Arrival of my injur'd Lord,  
To speak aloud my Guilt.*

because it is the Representation of an Impression of the Soul, and not a Relation of a Fact; besides, that by these Walls and Roofs, *Phædra* might understand the Persons that inhabited the Palace of *Theseus*, who knew what had happened. After this, we must not dissemble, that the Tears which moisten'd the Sands, and the Arms in *Homer*, might be the Tears of the *Greeks* themselves; which would reduce it more to  
Na-



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Nature, tho' a little exaggerated: But the Text don't naturally offer this Sense.

The fabulous Properties that the ancient Naturalists have ascribed to certain Soils, Plants, and Rivers, are very allowable in Poëtry; and these Properties themselves, which were often believ'd real, because they always bore an Analogy to their known Nature, are the true Model of Poetical Fictions. A Poet of a sound Judgment would be even capable of feigning Things that should be found true in a certain Place, or at a certain Time, without his either knowing or foreseeing any such Thing. This happen'd to *Tasso*; who, representing a terrible Noise, proceeding from the lowest Foundations of the enchanted Forest, hath expressed himself thus, (*Cant. 13. A. 21.*)

*When from the Wood a dreadful Sound was heard,  
As if the Winds, long in the Earth immur'd,  
Had just burst forth and rent the neighb'ring Rocks;  
Or like the Noise of a tempestuous Sea,  
When the loud Surges dash the craggy Shore:  
There Lions roar, there scaly Serpents hiss,  
There howle the Wolves, and rugged Bears are heard,  
There sounds the Trumpet, and the Thunder roars,  
And from one Noise proceed the various Sounds.*

Now

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Now there has been form'd, a little time ago, in the *Archipelago*, an Island, which has literally versify'd this poetical Fiction; as we are inform'd by the Relations that have been sent of it to the Academy of Sciences.\* This Island sometimes vomits up great Slakes of Fire, attended with a Noise equal to the Discharge of a Number of great Artillery Pieces, when discharg'd at once; at other Times, this Noise seems compos'd of the Sound of Drums and Trumpets, accompanied with Howlings and the Noise of all Sorts of Animals.

Yet I allow Poetry the Impossibility of Facts, provided there appears therein a kind of Possibility, according to our Notions of Nature. An Example of this Notion, is the ingenious and pleasant Fiction in *Rabelais*, of Words freezing in the Air during Winter, and thawing again in Spring; who relates, upon this Occasion, excellent Passages from the Ancients, *B. 4. Chap. 55*. But in the following Chapter he carries his Fiction too far, and looses himself, according to his accusom'd Manner, in Filth and Obscenity. I also condemn

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\* *Memoirs of the Academy of Sciences*, 1713.

many

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many Notions in the Fairy System, where Nature is much oftner strained and forced, than in the ancient Mythology. Nothing is more absurd, for Example, than these Fairies arming themselves; which, instead of having only certain Properties suitable to their Matter or Form, as that of being impenetrable and dazzling, or blinding those that behold them, move of themselves, or perform other human Actions. But to speak the Truth, *Homer* himself has given the first Example of this Fault, in the Productions of *Vulcan*, and especially in that of *Achilles'* Buckler; of which this now is the proper Place to treat.

*Thetis*, in the 18th B. (p. 130.) entering *Vulcan's* Apartment, finds the *Tripos* that he was preparing for Part of the Ornament and Furniture of a magnificent Palace; he had hung them upon Golden Wheels, so that of themselves they might go to, and return from the Assembly of the Gods. This Fiction manifestly transgresses against the Principle we have laid down. But 'twill be said, it is a God who was the Artificer hereof: I own it, and therefore we ought to have seen in this Work, a Perfection exceeding all humane Art and Invention. But this Perfection should have



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consisted in the Idea of an excellent Work of Gold, or other Mettal, which did not receive any Motion from Sculpture. If *Homer* had said, for Example, that these *Tripods* were so exactly mounted, that with one Touch of the Hand, he made them go from his Forge to the Assembly of the Gods, the Fiction would have been good, and it had even equalled that of the Horses of the Gods, who at one Leap travers'd half the Heavens. (*B. 5. p. 226.*) But for *Tripods* to move of themselves, makes only a monstrous Prodigy; and this so much the more, as that even with this Property, they might have been very ill finish'd; and therefore the Poet not exalting nor raising the Imagination in the Place he ought to have rais'd it, shocks it in a Particular where no Body expected it.

“*Vulcan* being inform'd of *Thetis*' Coming, advances, (*p. 133.*) and become cause of his Infirmary,” which yet did not hinder him in the first Book to carry Drink round to all the Gods, “he is supported here by beautiful Slaves, all of massy Gold, of such divine Workmanship, that they appear'd living; they were endowed with Understanding; they spoke, and had Strength and Agility; and by a particular Gift of  
“ the

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“ the immortal Powers, they had so  
 “ well learn’d the Art of their Master,  
 “ that they wrought along with him, in  
 “ making these surprizing Works and  
 “ Compositions, which were the Admi-  
 “ ration both of Gods and Men.” No-  
 thing can be more confus’d and per-  
 plex’d than all this ; for what can he  
 mean by Statues that have only the Ap-  
 pearance of Life, and which were real-  
 ly endow’d with Understanding and  
 Speech, and had Strength and Activity,  
 and which afterwards, by the Favour of  
 the immortal Powers, had learn’d their  
 Master’s Skill and Art ? Whither wou’d  
 the Fancy of *Homer* lead us, thus  
 to introduce the Gods every where ?  
 and not to be able to know whe-  
 ther it is the extraordinary Skill and  
 Art of *Vulcan*, or the particular Favour  
 of the other Gods, that had render’d  
 those Statues what they were. How-  
 ever it is, these thinking Statues are ab-  
 solutely vicious and improper in the  
 Sense and Phrase of the Poet ; for it is  
 absurd to give Understanding and Sen-  
 sation to Statues, while they continue  
 in that State. The Statue which the  
 Gods chang’d into a Woman, upon the  
 Prayer and Supplication of the Sculp-  
 tor, who became enamour’d with it, is  
 infinitely

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infinitely better imagin'd : The Skill and Dexterity of the Artificer, the Favour of the Gods for Merit, and the Gratitude and Acknowledgment of the new Person, whether to the Gods or her Lover, are engaging Objects both for the Heart and Mind. Secondly, *Vulcan*, according to the Notion of the Fable, is only a Smith, and Madam D. even confines him so much to his Trade, that, according to her, he couldn't so much as make a Pike for *Achilles* (3. 411.) But supposing him a Clockmaker, or even a Mechanick of a superior Order, this Art can at best reach no higher than making Statues walk or speak as if they were alive ; but to endow them with Judgment and Understanding, for this we must address to *Jupiter* ; as *Prometheus*, who in a Fiction much better contriv'd both for the Poetry and Allegory, was obliged to go and take Fire from Heaven, to animate the humane Figure he had form'd of the Dust of the Earth : But in *Homer*, 'tis *Vulcan* who gives those Statues Understanding, which *Jupiter* alone had Power to impart ; and 'tis the other Gods who taught them the Trade, which *Vulcan* only shou'd have taught them. When we read those Fictions, as Madam D. says very well,



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(3. 472.) "'tis very natural to desire  
 "to penetrate a little into the Sense  
 "they contain or include," according  
 to her, or that they ought to include,  
 according to me.

*Vulcan*, immediately yielding to the  
 Desires of the Goddess, goes to his  
 Forge, and approaching his Flames and  
 Blasts of Fire, he commands them to  
 work: These Blasts and Flames that  
 work, are of the same Kind with the  
*Tripods* that walk; so that what I have  
 said of the one may serve for the other:  
 But 'tis even upon this Occasion that  
 Madam D. makes her Boast of *Homer*,  
 for giving Life and Manners to all  
 Things, (*ibid* 476.) "*Homer*, says  
 "she, in another Place (3. 447.) ani-  
 "mates his Poetry to such a Degree,  
 "that, compar'd with it, every thing  
 "appears dead and languishing." In-  
 deed if this is what charms Madam D. it  
 were easy to please her at a very small  
 Expend; nor has *Homer* himself given  
 her all the Pleasure she might have ex-  
 pected; for he might, if he pleas'd,  
 give Motion to all the Instruments be-  
 longing to the Forge, and set them a  
 dancing: But, to speak seriously, there  
 is neither Wit nor Art, but in the Fic-  
 tions which are contriv'd and imagin'd  
 according

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according to the Rule above propos'd ; and I dare affirm, that she is the only Person who cannot distinguish the Wonderful, that requires much Study and Labour, from what is absurd and unreasonable, that costs nothing, and is of no Value.

The famous Buckler requires a stricter Discussion ; the Surprize it gives all Readers, has occasion'd some general Objections ; to which they have return'd Answers of the same Kind : We shall here advance something more particular and exact. I object, in the first Place, to that terrible Number and Multitude of Objects, in so narrow and limited a Compass, whatever Dimensions are given to the Buckler of *Achilles* ; for there is here sufficient to fill the Gallery of a Palace, without omitting even the Cieling itself : I don't draw my Objection from the Difficulty of placing so many Figures in so small a Space ; a God might do it, and 'tis even in the Power of a Man : I deduce it from the Effect such Figures produce ; which, allowing them as perfect as you please, must yet be almost imperceptible ; so in a Buckler that is to be carry'd by a Man always in Action, the Objects shou'd have been more conspi-

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cuous,

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cuous and rather clear than perfect. 2dly, It appears to me that Madam D. considers the Buckler as one single Picture, and I don't perceive that she conceives any Divisions therein: I know that a very learned Man is now preparing a Work, wherein I am told that he makes use of this last Idea, dividing the Buckler, which he supposes round, into twelve Pictures separated by Lines, which terminate in two concentrick Circumferences: I hear he places the Ocean at the Center of the whole Work, and the Heavens in the circular Ring contiguous to the Central Circle; that above this were the twelve Pictures encompass'd again with an exterior circular Ring at the Extremity of the Buckler, where he again places the Ocean. I can answer nothing particular to an Explication that is not yet publish'd at the Time this is going to the Press; but besides that *Homer* would have been highly to blame for having suppress'd, or ill and obscurely express'd Circumstances which had never been before discover'd, I dare affirm, that there never was, either in Sculpture or Painting, a more fantastical or gothick Disposition than this. I shall here confine my self to the common Explication, follow'd  
by



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by Madam D. that proves by the Disposition of the Ocean, which, according to the Text, (*B. 18. p. 146.*) encompasses the whole Buckler, that *Homer* knew the Ocean surrounded the Earth; \* whereas, according to the other Scheme and Construction, it follows, that *Homer* believ'd that the Ocean encompass'd the Earth, the Earth the Heavens, and that the Heavens again surrounded the Ocean. According to the Sense then of Madam D. which I approve of as to this Particular, the Buckler is only a single Picture, to which the Earth serves for a Ground-Plat, and which the Representation of the Ocean surrounds, as the real Ocean indeed surrounds our Hemisphere. Now considering the Buckler as in this single View, the Objects therein are strangely disorder'd and confus'd; for Battles, Judgments and Dances don't well agree, and break the Unity of Action or Subject, which is of equal Importance in Painting as in Poetry. But tho' its principal and capital Fault and Defect is this, where does *Vulcan* suppose the Eye of the Spectator? We know that in the same Ground of a Picture, we can only

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\* 3. 485.

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represent so many Objects as the Spectator can discover while he remains at the true Point of Sight, in which we suppose him still fix'd and immoveable ; because every Picture shou'd be consider'd as a plain Surface, upon which are drawn the Lines and the Colours of real Objects that are visible Sideways. Now if the Spectator is upon the Ground, according to the ordinary and natural Choice of the Point of Sight of a Picture, you can never perswade me to believe that he can see with one Look, cross one and the same Surface, two *Grecian* Cities, *Athens* and *Eleusis*, (3. 479.) and the Ocean which encompasses our Hemisphere. The sole Curvature of the Earth in an equal Place, makes us lose Objects at a certain Distance from the Eye, much more in so vast an Extent. In *Homer's* Time, 'tis true, they did not believe the Earth was round or spherical ; but this Error didn't occasion their discovering upon its Surface more Objects than we can now. We must also carefully distinguish Countries and Seas, with which we limit and terminate the Horizon till it vanishes ; and Actions, which shou'd clearly and distinctly appear to the Eye of the Spectator. Thus, supposing the Specta-

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Spectator upon the Ground, the Project that Mr. D. \* and Madam D. † attribute to *Homer*, of representing the whole Universe in one Picture, is contrary to the Rules both of Perspective and Painting. *Virgil* has taken an equal Extent in his Description of the Buckler of *Aeneas*, and has hereby violated not only the Unity of Place, but that of Time also, by representing and exhibiting Things that had been transacted many Days and Ages distant from one another : But *Virgil*, not surrounding his Buckler with the Ocean, has not furnish'd so strong an Objection as *Homer* against the Division of this Buckler into several Pictures.

The true Point of Sight then in the Buckler of *Achilles*, is at some Distance from the Earth ; and, supposing the Surface to be spherical, if the Spectator can perceive and discover the Ocean, which surrounds all the other Works and Compositions in the Buckler, as it surrounds the Earth, the Rule of Tangents, taking only for the Arch the Extent of the Earth between the Eastern and Western Ocean, will carry

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\* *Poet.* 460.

† 3. 479.



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this Point of Sight to above two thousand Leagues Distance; and, even upon the Supposition that the Surface were plain and not spherical, this Distance must yet be very considerable, to place the Spectator above the Mountains, that wou'd otherwise obstruct his discovering so vast a Territory and Space. Now in either Supposition, *Homer* ought not to have limited himself to two Cities, as he has done, but was indispensibly oblig'd to place in his Buckler all those of our Hemisphere, since he gives their Extent and Prospect Dimensions: Tho', on the other Hand, in either of these Suppositions, the Towns, and consequently the Men, cou'd have been visible; or if the Painter shou'd render them visible, he must transgress beyond Measure against all the Rules of Proportion that ought to be observ'd between the Objects and the Ground they cover. Now let us proceed to the Description the Poet himself gives hercof.

“ He begins with the Heavens which  
 “ *Vulcan* had represented upon the  
 “ Buckler: There he places (*p.* 138.)  
 “ the Sun and the Moon, the Pleiades,  
 “ the Hyades, the Violent Orion, and  
 “ the Bear or Wain, which turning al-  
 “ ways

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“ ways round the Pole, appears ever  
“ visible to us, and always observes  
“ Orion. This is, *adds the Poet, ibid.*  
“ the only Constellation that never  
“ bathes it self in the Waters and  
“ Waves of the Ocean.” The old  
Admirers of *Homer*, upon his using  
any one Term of Art, immediately  
concluded, that *Homer* must be an  
absolute Master of that particular Sci-  
ence; have here boasted of his great  
Skill and Knowledge in Astronomy:  
Now, on the contrary, I will de-  
monstrate, by the little that he here  
says, that he knew nothing at all here-  
in; for, first, a Poet knowing in Astro-  
nomy would have been glad of such an  
Opportunity to name all the Constella-  
tions that cou'd appear at the same  
Time in our Hemisphere; their Names  
wou'd not have taken up above three  
or four Verses, especially at a Time  
when they were not all yet known or  
distinguish'd; and their Enumeration  
wou'd have been shorter, shew'd more  
Learning and Knowledge, and been  
more entertaining and curious, than  
that of the three and thirty *Nereids* of  
the Court of *Thetis*, which are all nam'd  
successively in *B. 18. p. 110.* tho' this  
long List and Catalogue affords no Sa-  
tisfaction

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tisfaction to the Reader, who is at last inform'd that they have not been all nam'd. The Poet might also, by placing the Sun under a certain Constellation of the *Zodiack*, represented in an Astronomical Configuration, or Emblematical Figure, have mark'd the Season and Day in which the principal Action of his Hero must happen. It is by some such Stroke as this that a Poet or Painter discovers his Knowledge in Astronomy, but there is none requisite to name or draw at a Venture some few Stars.

Secondly, what does he mean by the Bear's always observing Orion? Thus comparing a Constellation of the *Æquinoctial*, as Orion, with a Constellation near the Pole, as the Bear: This shou'd not have been said but of a Constellation lying in the same Circle of Declination with the other; whereas even the Head of the great Bear, which was the only one known by *Homer*, is 40 Degrees distant from Orion's Circle of Declination.

The preceding Objections are new, and perhaps a little too refined for the Age of *Homer*: But here follows a plainer and more obvious one, which has been made by the Ancients themselves, and



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and which convicts the Poet of a palpable Error and Mistake, contained in the Assertion and Proposition he lays down on this Occasion, that the Bear or Chariot is the only Constellation which never bathes itself in the Waves of the Sea. *Aristotle* answers to this, that by the *only one*, *Homer* means the *most noted and known*: But was *Aristotle* ignorant that the least Confusion of Terms in Astronomical Subjects, which depend upon Geometry, produce a gross and inexcusable Error? Besides, though *Homer* had said, *The most known of all those that never set*, his Proposition would not thereby become more true or just; for neither the Bear, nor any other Constellation, should be produced for an absolute Example of Stars that never set; since there are People to whom *Cassiopeia*, the *Swan*, and all the Constellations of the Cælestial Hemisphere, never set any more than the Bear; and others, on the contrary, to whom the Bear, and even yet other more Northern Constellations, set as exactly, and become equally invisible to them as Orion. If *Homer* had said that the Bear, which is far advanc'd on this Side the Pole, is reckoning by the Æquator, the first of the Constellation that don't set, *πρωτη*, instead

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instead of *oin*, which wou'd not have spoil'd his Verse, he had said true enough with respect to the Parallel of *Troy*, which is in the 42d Degree: Upon which Occasion it had been proper to inform the Reader, that *Vulcan* calculates all from the Position of that City, whereas he seems to place himself very inconveniently between *Athens* and *Eleusis*. *Strabo*, who, as a Geographer, shou'd have defended the Rights and Privileges of Astronomy, has yet here, like others, set his Zeal for defending *Hom*er, and he pretends that by the Bear the Poet here means the Artick Circle. Now you must first know, that among the Ancients the Artick Circle was not fix'd, as at present, within near a Minute of 23 Degrees and 1 half of our Pole, and trac'd by the Revolution of the Pole of the Ecliptick round the Pole of the World. The Artick Circle advanc'd and increas'd, according to the greater Elevation of the Pole, and was always the first Parallel that appear'd entire above the Horizon. This is clear from a Passage of *Strabo* himself, towards the End of his second Book, where he speaks of the different Nations that have the Artick Circle lesser or greater than the Tropick, or equal to it;

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it; and in this Sense the Ancients very justly bounded with their Artick Circle those Constellations that never set, in whatever Parallel they were: But the Proposition that Mr. D. (*Poet.* 451.) cites from *Strabo*, who says that the Artick Circle is the Round of the Rising and Setting of the Stars, is utterly false, according to the Notion we at present have of this Circle. However it is, it is absolutely impossible that by the Bear, *Homer* shou'd have understood either the ancient or the modern Artick Circle; for besides that he places the Bear in Company with Orion, the Pleiades and the Hyades, which are Constellations, or Parts of a Constellation, and not Circles; he must certainly have lost all his Reason and Judgment, to say, that a Circle observes a Constellation, or that the Artick Circle observes Orion, rather than any other Northern Constellations. All these Errors clearly demonstrate, that *Homer* spoke at random, and render him the first Model of all those that upon mere Hearsays, or at most from some borrow'd Notions, will treat Subjects whose first Principles they are ignorant of. Mr. *Boileau*, who took a religious Care to abstain from all Knowledge of Geometry,



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metry, which is, of all humane Sciences the most capable of exercising and enlarging the Mind, of forming and strengthening the Judgment, was guilty of a like Absurdity the only Time he ventur'd to speak of Astronomy; for intending to propose two different Systems of the Sun, he says, *If the Sun is fix'd, or turns upon its Axis*: Now it happens that in one and the same Modern System, the Sun is both fix'd and turns upon its Axis. But let us see if *Homer* is happier in his Description of the Earth, than in that of the Heavens.

In one of the two Towns which he speaks of, *Vulcan* has represented a Judgment (*p. 139.*) concerning a Man that had committed Murder, and who affirms against the nearest Relation of the Dead, that he has paid the Fine to which he was condemned. A Spectator may guess by the Posture of the Persons, the Subject of a Judgment publickly and generally known in History, as that of *Solomon* or *Daniel*; but it is hard to guess the Subject in a Picture drawn at Pleasure; and I don't well comprehend how *Vulcan* could possibly express this. However it is, this is the first Description, which gives us Occasion to doubt

*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 271

doubt whether the Figures of the Buckler are fix'd or in Motion; at least, we can discover here no Notice taken of one of the first Rules in Painting, which is to shew and exhibit one Movement only of the Action represented. Madam D. was aware of this Rule, and makes Use of it to explain the Posture and Situation of two Men, which the Poet in B. 17. places together in the same Chariot, and the very Instant in which one ascends the other descends, "In Poetry, as in Painting, *says she*, " (3. 450.) there is often but one " single Moment we are carefully to " seize and observe." And a little lower, " It is a single Moment that " gives us this Image: In reading the " Poets, *adds she*, we often fall into " great Confusion and Absurdity, if we " don't rightly distinguish the Moment " of which they speak." With respect to the Poets, they are not obliged to confine themselves to a single Moment, and when they do, it is their Business to distinguish it: But if they intend that this Rule of Painting should be favourable to them in any of their Descriptions, they ought to be very careful and exact Observers thereof when they themselves speak of Painting; yet  
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we shall now shew, that *Homer* has most wildly multiplied these Moments in all the Actions he has represented upon his Buckler. In the Judgment, for Example, tho' old Men are seated in order to hear both Parties, and their Scepters are held by the Heralds, this is one Moment: When they rise to give their several Opinions and Judgments, and take their Scepters out of the Hands of the Heralds, this makes two: 'Tis also said that they give their Opinions one after another, which requires as many Moments as there are Judges. If to this Difficulty 'tis answer'd, that some of the Judges were yet seated, whilst the others go to give their Verdicts; 'tis in this very Particular that *Vulcan* has too far extended the Action, and transgress'd the present Rule; since in a well regulated Tribunal none of the Judges ever give their Opinions, whilst the others are hearing the Parties or Pleaders: And indeed, when we tell a Painter that his Piece ought only to exhibit a single Moment, we understand hereby that none of his Persons should do any Action which is not consistent in that very Instant with what he makes another do, *i. e.* that cou'd not be done in the same Moment:



*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 273

ment : But we never judg'd it necessary to caution a Painter that he shou'd not make the same Person perform two different or contradictory Actions at the same Time; nor to tell him to be aware of drawing a Judge seated upon the Bench attentive hearing a Cause, and the same Judge rising and going to give his Judgment thereupon; yet this is the Idea which the Description of *Homer* suggests. Now this is a Thing in it self absolutely impossible, unless the Painter or Sculptor hath repeated the same Person under other Figures in the same Picture; a Thing generally condemn'd, and that seems not to have been plac'd in the Buckler, or else that the sole Figure of the same Person never mov'd, which is here indeed the Thought of *Homer*, tho' Mr. and Madam D. are of the contrary Opinion. I don't now speak of the third Supposition or Hypothesis, which is that of the Multiplication of the Pictures and Draught; whenever it appears, we must say, that if a Painter is to be condemn'd for violating this Rule in a single Figure, he must make himself yet more ridiculous to compose a Series of Figures that differ'd only by a few Gestures in the same Action, because

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we may indeed compose a Series of History, but not a Series of Gestures or Postures. Thus, in whatever Light we consider this Matter, *Homer* is destroy'd by Reason, and can only be supported and defended by Ignorance and Prejudice. About the other Town (p. 140.) are encamped two Armies, and it's impossible here not to perceive the Figures to be very quick, and various in their Motion; for, according to the Sense that Madam D. understands the Description of these two Armies, which yet is so obscure, that the *Greek* Commentators own'd they cou'd never discover its true Sense or Meaning therein, (3. 481.) One comes to besiege the Town, and the Other prepares for its Defence; the First makes Propositions to the Other, who declines and refuses them; thereupon the Army that stood upon the Defence goes, and lies in Ambuscade, in order to cut off the Provisions from the Army that was to attack: " Whilst the Women, Children, " and old Men defend the Walls and " Ramparts. Here there are Troops " that march through cover'd Ways, " *Mars* and *Pallas* are at their Head; as " soon as these Troops arrive upon the " Bank of the River where the Cattle " of

*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 275

“ of the Besiegers came to drink, they  
“ hide themselves under their Arms,  
“ and detach two Soldiers to give  
“ them Notice as soon as the Cattle  
“ arrive : At the same Time there ap-  
“ pear Flocks of Sheep and Oxen, at-  
“ tended with two Shepherds, who su-  
“ specting no Wile or Stratagem, were  
“ diverting themselves by playing on  
“ their Pipes : The Troops that lay in  
“ Ambush rise, and falling among the  
“ Flocks, make a cruel Slaughter of  
“ them, and kill the Shepherds. The  
“ Enemy, who were before the Place,  
“ hearing the Noise, mount their Hor-  
“ ses, and fly with all Speed to the  
“ Rescue and Defence of their Car-  
“ tle : They come to an Engagement,  
“ and thereupon a warm Battle ensues  
“ upon the Banks of the River ; Fu-  
“ ry, Confusion, and Death reign eve-  
“ ry where : Some Wounded fall into  
“ their Enemies Hands, others are ta-  
“ ken without receiving any Wound ;  
“ one is dragg'd along dead, another  
“ is still defending himself in the Arms  
“ of Death.” I omit taking Notice in  
this Description of the Fancy of *Homer*,  
in making the two Armies march when  
they were close by one another, and  
who needed only engage in the Place



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where they already were; in which Particular he makes them act very differently from the *Greek* and *Trojan* Armies, to which *Madam D.* compares them, (3. 481.) who never stir from one Place. I shall only make some Reflections upon the Motion of the two Armies in the Buckler, and we shall then see what Distance we are from the Moment where we began. How shall we again recover in this bloody Action the two Armies that had just before been exchanging Overtures and Proposals with one another? Will it be said, that the Head of the Armies make Proposals, while the Rear on one Side are laying an Ambush, and on the other sending out a Reinforcement to some Part or Branch of their Army? Do *Mars* and *Pallas* march before one of those Rears, while a second Rank arrive at the River, and a third lyeth in Ambush, and a fourth engages the Enemy, and a fifth conquers, and a sixth is overthrown; or else is it the last Line that receives Proposals, while the first is already conquer'd? I leave you the Choice of either of those Absurdities; 'tis the same for the other Army. Presently after this, the Poet says, (p. 142.)

“ All these Figures engage and fight  
 “ one

*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 277

“ one another, as if they were so many living Men.” Upon which Madam D. makes this Remark: “ It wou’d seem, says she, (3. 481.) that *Homer* foresaw that some of his Interpreters taking his Expressions too literally, might indeed believe that these Figures were really alive, and actually made all manner of Motions; wherefore ’tis, he adds, *as if they were so many living Men*; which is sufficient to undeceive them, and to shew that *Homer* only speaks as every Man ought, who describes and explains a Picture; he gives to his Figures the Motion they only seem to have.”

’Tis true, that in explaining a common Picture, wherein a Battle is drawn and represented, one may say that the Figures mix and engage one with another, as if they were living Men: But, on the other Hand, I beseech Madam D. only to suppose a Moment wherein the Figures did really move; and I take the Liberty to ask her, if to express this Motion, she her self wou’d not say, that the Figures mix’d as if they were so many living Men? This Passage then proves nothing, since it is equally true in both Cases. Moreover, I affirm that it is absurd to say, (upon

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Sight of a Battle drawn and represented in a common Picture) that the Soldiers engag'd therein as so many living Men; for any Body may justly answer me, What if they did not fight, must they appear then as dead Men? Do not all the Figures of a Picture, in whatever Posture or Situation they are in, whether of Motion or Rest, still appear as so many living Men? When therefore *Homer* says, that the Figures of the Buckler mix and engage like so many living Men, we may reasonably suppose he did not mean to say a Thing general and common to all sorts of Pictures, but that he understood thereby that they did actually move, altho' they were not endow'd with Life. What follows will fully prove, that *Homer* actually supposes a real Motion in the Figures, and will moreover afford us a certain Rule to distinguish in his Descriptions of the Buckler, the lively and elegant Expressions, from those which are only forc'd and exaggerated.

*Vulcan* also, says the Poet, (*p.* 145.) represents, with a surprizing Variety, a very Dramatick, or profoundly Pantomimick Dance; where young Men and young Women of incomparable Beauty,



*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 279

Beauty, joining Hands, dance together.

—— All this Company dances sometimes in a Circle with such Exactness, Agility and Activity, that the Motion of a Potter's Wheel is neither swifter, nor more equal and uniform; sometimes this circular Dance opens, and the Company still joining Hands continue dancing, by making a thousand Turnings and Windings. I won't criticise upon the extravagant Comparison of a circular Dance with the Swift-ness of a Potter's Wheel; nor of the bad Effect this Velocity, if it were true, must have upon the Eyes of the Spectators; nor of the physical Error that Madam D. is guilty of in her Remark, with Reference to the Subject of the Wheel, *viz.* that the Weight of the Matter diminishes the Velocity; (3. 485.) I shall only observe, it is absolutely impossible, that without a successive Motion of the Figures, the Dance shou'd sometimes turn round like a Potter's Wheel, and sometimes open, to make so many Windings; for whenever it opens, the circular Motion must of Necessity stop: Nor can it happen that one Part should continually turn round, while the other opens.

" The Objection of some Criticks, says  
" Madam D. (3. 484.) is how the Art

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“ of Sculpture cou’d possibly represent  
 “ those young Men and Women some-  
 “ times dancing in a Circle, and some-  
 “ times apart? This is very hard indeed,  
 “ *says she*, as if the Artificer were not  
 “ at Liberty to make his Persons appear  
 “ in different Views and Conditions.”  
 I have just shewn, with reference to this  
 Dance, that not only Art depriv’d the  
 Painter of such a Liberty, but that even  
 Nature renders it an Impossibility. “ All  
 “ the other Objections, *continues Ma-*  
 “ *dam D.* as to the Troops that go to  
 “ lie in Ambush, and the Youth that  
 “ sung agreeably to the Musick of the  
 “ Guittar on which he play’d, and the  
 “ Bull that bellow’d when he was de-  
 “ vour’d by the Lyon, and the Concerts,  
 “ are childish and trifling: We could  
 “ never speak justly of Painting, if such  
 “ Expressions were forbid us.” In the  
 Number of these Expressions, some are  
 allow’d, but others are never us’d. We  
 may say that a Bull roars when he is  
 devour’d by a Lyon; because the Painter  
 or Graver may represent the Bull with  
 his Mouth widely open’d, and so in an  
 Attempt to cry: We may say also a  
 Youth sings, by seeing his Mouth  
 regularly dispos’d for it, tho’ some-  
 what more hard and difficult to repre-  
 sent;

*upon* HOMER'S Iliad. 281

sent; but we can never say that Armies at the Foot of their Walls hear Proposals, and yet go at a Distance from thence to lie in Ambush; because the two external Actions, which are the only Means by which Painting speaks and expresses it self, are inconsistent; and 'tis the same in the others. If Mr. and Madam D. have both said, \* "That in explaining a Picture of *Raphael's* or *Poussin's*, we must necessarily animate the Figures, and make them speak and act conformably to the Design of the Painter," they are in the Right in some Degree: We may explain, and even at some Length in a Picture, both the Thoughts of those who speak, and those who hear; but 'tis impossible they shou'd ever perform five or six Actions successively. Mr. *Felibien* † has given us several Explications of Pictures; among the rest, that of the Transfiguration by *Raphael*; and of the raining of the Manna, by *Poussin*; This last especially, is as long as it is warm and elegant; he animates the Figures of his Picture, and makes them speak and act conformably to the Intention and Design

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\* M. Poet. of Arist. p. 467. and M. D. 3. 479.

† Discourse upon the Lives of the Painters.



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of the Painter : But do we find there any such strange Expressions, as in *Ho-mer's* Description ? Do they occasion almost all their Readers, to think that the Figures in *Poussin's* Picture are in a real Motion, like those of our moveable Pictures that are shewn in our Fairs ? *Eustathius* cites some of the Ancients, who believ'd the Figures of the Buckler were of this Kind ; Nay, himself, after having sometime resisted and opposed this Opinion, cou'd not help afterwards falling in with, and embracing it, but affirm'd, that there was some Machinery, or Mechanism in the Representation thereof. Mr. D. relates this (*Art of Poet.* 466.) Let's allow and own it then, that these Figures did actually move, in the Intention of the Poet ; this is the only Exposition that will salve or smooth all Difficulties : Madam D. copying after Mr. D. her Husband, \* says, † “ There is nothing more simple and natural, than the Description of this “ Buckler”. I agree with them, but 'tis supposing the Figures actually to move ; whereas they pretend to find their Simplicity in the plain and perpe-

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\* *Art of Poet.* 467,

† *B. 3.* 479.

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tual Contradictions of the Expressions of the Poet, with the Fixedness and Immobility of these Figures. After all, I can't imagine why Madam D. so much opposes their Motion; she admires the *Tripods*, or three-footed Stools, that went and return'd from the Assemblies of the Gods; she is charm'd with the Life, Manners and Actions given to the Bellows of *Vulcan*. She says (3. 471.) with *Aristotle*, and Mr. D. her Husband, "That with respect to Poetry, what may appear here unreasonable and miraculous, is exactly what an Epic Poem requires; and that with respect to the several Degrees of Goodness and Excellence, the Thing is thus represented after a more admirable and excellent Manner; and that the Originals ought ever to have the Preference." She affirms, that when this is duly consider'd with these Views and Relations, which are more difficult at least for me to comprehend, than even those of Algebra, we shou'd be surpriz'd at the Censure which *Scaliger* makes of these walking *Tripods*. Why shou'd she then be surpriz'd at the Motion of these Figures, which can only be excepted against, in my System, and by my Rule, that requires still the Thread of Nature to be closely follow'd

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follow'd and observ'd in every Part of Fiction and Fable? And indeed the Principles of Madam D. render such moveable Figures, not only allowable, but necessary. She says, Vol. 3. (474.) " We ought to observe here the Judgment, Conduct and Discretion of *Ho-* " *mer*, when he speaks of those wonder- " ful Works of *Vulcan*: He mentions " first only the walking *Tripods*, that " walk of themselves; after this, the " Mind of his Reader being already ac- " custom'd to Prodigy and Miracles, he " then shews him two animated golden " Statues; and thence he proceeds to " the wonderful Fabrick and Workman- " ship of the Buckler. As for me, I " must confess, let them term it a Wo- " man's Simplicity, Folly or Weakness, " or what they please, I find that *Ho-* " *mer* has accompanied still those mira- " culous Passages with so much Proba- " bility, that I am indeed deceiv'd, and " think I actually see what he only " draws, and paints, or represents." But indeed, if the *Tripods* walk, if the Statues are animated, while the Figures of the Buckler remain fix'd and immoveable, what a poor pitiful Gradation were this? Madam D. her self says, (3. 479.) " That she does not find or " per-



*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 285

“ perceive, in the Description of the  
“ Buckler, a single Word, that *Homer*  
“ might not have us'd, supposing the  
“ Buckler had only been the Product of  
“ human Art.” Is this then the third  
Term of Gradation, which had for its  
first Degree walking *Tripods*, and for its  
second Degree, intelligent Statues, en-  
dow'd with Wisdom and Intelligence?  
Certainly the third shou'd have been  
with Figures, not only endow'd with  
Motion, but also with divine Wisdom  
and Understanding.

The Poet concludes the whole De-  
scription with this beautiful Circum-  
stance already mention'd; “ At the Ex-  
“ tremity of the Buckler all round, he  
“ places the vast and immense Ocean,  
“ which includes all these great and won-  
“ derful Works.” (p. 146.) Madam D.  
who has no Diffidence any where of  
*Homer's* Judgment or Prudence, gives  
him here her Praises, notwithstanding  
the gross Error he is here guilty of. It  
appears, *says she*, (348.) from this Pas-  
sage, “ That *Homer* knew that the  
“ Earth was surrounded with the O-  
“ cean.” Yes: But if the Ocean encom-  
passes the whole Buckler, where has  
*Vulcan* plac'd the Heavens, upon the  
Supposition of a single Picture, which is  
Madam

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Madam D.'s, and the only true one? For a Firmament so open, as it shou'd be here, (not only by what it represents) but also by the Extent of the Horizon, that's necessary to the Objects which *Vulcan* places upon the Earth) shou'd fill, and consequently terminate and surround all the superior Part of the Buckler. This last Objection and Difficulty is so decisive, as to make almost all the others unnecessary and superfluous, and might always excuse me from all the rest; for it shews that *Homer* not only knew nothing either of Perspective or Painting, but that even he did not so much as form to himself an Idea of what he intended to represent or describe.

But we must not finish our Criticism of the Buckler, without saying a Word of the Design which Mr. and Madam D. attribute to *Homer*, of representing the whole Universe thereby, and whatever takes up the Thoughts of Men, whether in the State of Peace or War.\* If this is true, I esteem *Homer* very ridiculous, for pretending to accomplish this Design in the narrow Compass of four or five Articles; and he's fallen into the same Inconvenience with all those who undertake Subjects of too large

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\* M. D. Art of Poet. 469. and M. D. 3, 485.

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an Extent ; they always say too much and too little. Mr. D. (*Poet.* 469.) boasts of " his having included every " thing therein, except Navigation and " Hunting." This is an old Maxim of ancient Prejudice and Ignorance : *Homer has said every thing* ; but where do we find in the Buckler the several stately, magnificent and various Abodes and Habitations of the Celestial, Marine and Infernal Deities, plac'd therein ; and if the Buckler represents the Structure of the World, according to Madam D. (3. 438.) where are the Heavens, the subordinate Planets, and the Spheres, with the Elements ? If they confine us to the Surface of this Globe, and the Affairs and Business of Men, where shall we find the Feasts and Sacrifices instituted to the Honour and Worship of the Gods, with which he ought to have begun ; the Building or Consecration of their Temples, the Consultations of the Oracles and Augurs ? Where does there any where appear any Traces of the Foundations of their great Towns and Cities, the Solemnities us'd at the Coronation of their Kings and Princes, the Funeral Poms and Obsequies us'd according to the Custom of all Countries ? And where  
has



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has he even plac'd the several Exercises, Sports, and Games of *Greece* alone, to mention no other? How came he to forget all the Arts and Sciences, of which he had so profound a Knowledge? (2. 480.) Here are many Things then omitted besides Navigation and Hunting: He omitted Hunting, says *Madam D.* because at that Time it was not an Entertainment for Heroes; but was not *Hercules* the most famous of all Hunters, and did he not deserve Praise for having kill'd the *Nemean Lion*, the *Erimanthian Boar*, and the Stag with the brazen Feet, which he overtook in the Chace in his full Career? Was not *Orion*, the Son of *Neptune*, whose Constellation *Homer* had just before nam'd, in Preference to so many others, a Hunter, and a Relation to *Diana* the Goddess of Hunting? *Homer* himself has repeated at large the History of *Meleager*, Son to King *Oeneus*, and the chief Huntsman of the Boar of *Calidon*; a great Number of his Companions are taken from Hunting, and are they all therefore so low, poor and mean, as the Comparison of the *Asi*s appears to some Criticks to be? He hath omitted Navigation, adds *Mr. D.* because it has always done more Hurt than

*upon* HOMER'S *Iliad*. 289

than Good to Men: And has War then, upon which he enlarges so much, done much more Good to Mankind? In this View, and even for this Reason, he shou'd have represented Shipwrecks, the better to deter and dissuade Men from the Pursuit of Navigation. But this is not all; in the System of Mr. D. who is a Christian, Navigation is not only useful but necessary, if we consider the World in its Original and Propagation; for all Men being descended from one Father, nothing but Navigation cou'd convey and disperse the Posterity of this first Man over the Face of the Earth, or can now carry and convey thither the Knowledge and Light of the Gospel: And even in the System of *Homer* himself, according to which most Part of People were *αὐτοχθόνες*, or born in the Country they inhabited; Navigation was useful, and even necessary to discharge Provinces that were overstock'd with People, and to send Colonies into other habitable Countries; not to mention the Article of Trade and Commerce which *Homer* never pretended to condemn, or if he had, it cou'd never have been allow'd him. Madam D. her self, who here approves (3.485.) the Thought of her Husband, absolutely contradicts

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it at the End of her Remarks upon the preceding Book, (3. 456.) upon Occasion of a Comparison of our Author, where to represent *Menelaus* and *Merion* carrying off the Body of *Patroclus*, who had done so many signal Services for the *Greeks*, he introduces it under the Image of two stout Bulls dragging along the heavy Weight of a vast Beam, or the large Mast of a Ship. (B. 17. p. 104.) For she observes, with *Eustathius*, "That  
 " *Homer* purposely chose here to in-  
 " stance a Beam and the Mast of a Ship,  
 " as being two Things the most necessa-  
 " ry for Men; a Beam for the Uses of  
 " Building, and a Mast for those of  
 " Trade and Navigation." Thus it is that Prejudice makes the same Remarks, and uses the same Topicks, both *Pro* and *Con*, tho' as impertinently, and to as little Purpose, in the one Case as in the other.

I shall say nothing here of certain Fictions of *Homer*, which are of no Signification or Use; such as that of *Minerva*, who preparing, at the Instigation of *Juno*, (B. 5. p. 222.) to go and engage with *Mars*, puts upon her Head (224.) a great Helmet of Gold, cover'd with four Plumes of Feathers, sufficient to have cover'd the numerous Battalions of so large



*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 291

large an Army, as even a thousand great Cities were able to raise; and as soon as she comes before *Mars*, upon the Field of Battle, (*p.* 231.) she leaves this Helmet and takes *Pluto's*: Why did not she take it at first? And besides, where puts she the first which took up so much room, and where got she the second which did not belong to her? It were certainly too severe, too nicely and strictly to examine all the Parts of a Poem, or to pretend to justify their Disposition and Order, as so many Facts produc'd in a Pleading, or at a Trial; but yet, a Poet, like a Musician, ought to take particular Care to prepare and soften the Discords.

There are in *Homer* other Fictions, which appear to me much more vicious and absurd, which are certain chimerical Ideas that present themselves to the Imagination under no distinct Form. As when one sees, *says he*, (*B.* 16. *p.* 24.) during a serene Season, a black Cloud gather it self on the Top of *Olympus*, and spread it self over the Face of Heaven, then *Jupiter* threatens the Earth and Sea with a furious Tempest; 'twas much after the same Manner we see Light, accompanied with Fear and Terror, dart it self, almost of a sudden,

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from the Vessels, toward the Walls of *Ilium*. It is not easy here to connect Comparison and Fact together, and even the Fact it self is not easy to apprehend. Madam D. says upon this Occasion, (3. 421.) "That it is very Beautiful  
"and Poetical, the representing the  
"Troops thus dismay'd and put to  
"flight, under the Emblem of two Per-  
"sons, Terror and Flight, darting them-  
"selves, as it were from the Greek Ships,  
"and running toward *Troy*." The Greek expressly says, by *Noise, Clamour and Terror*, and not *that they run with such Speed towards the Walls of Ilium*; so that it don't furnish or suggest the Image which Madam D. here mentions; but if it did, these Troops chang'd into two Persons, could not please us. "Madam D. assigns the Reason hereof to be in our Language, which is not accusom'd, *she says*, to such a sublime Poetry." She shou'd rather have assign'd the Cause to the Improvement of our Taste and Judgment, which sound Philosophy hath accusom'd to reject, even in Eloquence and Poetry it self, all Propositions that don't excite a clear, just and distinct Idea of Things. 'Tis true, that our Language, which began to improve, at the same Time that  
true

*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 293

true Philosophy, or the Knowledge of just and exact Reasoning was introduc'd among us; and seems to reject, even before any Reflection of the Mind, all such confus'd Expressions. It was for this Reason that Madam D. has very judiciously alter'd a Passage in the 17th B. where *Homer*, according to the literal Translation she gives in her Remark, (3. 435.) says, "But this Toil and Labour, that is to say, this Fight and Engagement, won't continue long, without being warmly disputed, and undergoing all the Tryal of Terrour and Power." This wou'd have undoubtedly appear'd a meer *Galimatias*, in our Language, or a senseless, abstruse and unintelligible Piece of Nonsense; Madam D. has therefore alter'd it thus: "Terror and Force must quickly decide this Engagement;" which is somewhat better, or more tolerable, tho' scarce any *French* Writer wou'd have thus express'd himself originally. When one cannot translate literally, says Madam D. upon this Occasion, (*ibid.* 434.) "One must take the true Notion of the Poet, and express it as well as may be, departing as little from it as is possible. This is what I al-



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“ ways study and endeavour, when I  
 “ can't exactly follow *Homer*. What is  
 “ beautiful in the *Greek*, adds Madam  
 “ *D.* would appear sometimes quite o-  
 “ therwise in our Language: I have  
 “ therefore taken the Idea, and expref-  
 “ sed it by another Turn, which I leave  
 “ to the Judgment of the Criticks.” All  
 true Judges will particularly value our  
 Language, for the Advantage it carries  
 along with it, of making a true Di-  
 stinction of clear and distinct Ideas,  
 from those which are otherwise; and  
 shewing such Distinction and Choice,  
 even to those who are ignorant of Philo-  
 sophy; but we shall treat more fully of  
 this Subject in the last Chapter of this  
 present Work.

This Taste and Inclination for sense-  
 less and groundless chimerical Notions  
 and Ideas, which are to be found in a  
 few Passages in *Homer*, has prodigiously  
 spread it self throughout all the Works  
 of his Admirers; and hath there  
 produc'd that great Number of far-  
 fetch'd Glosses and Interpretations,  
 and those empty and precarious Praises  
 and Encomiums which Madam *D.* has  
 translated from *Eustathius*. Thus upon  
 a Passage in B. 5. where *Æneas* is sud-  
 denly cur'd of a Wound he had just re-  
 ceiv'd,

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ceiv'd, *Eustathius*, as cited by *Madam D.* says, (1. 468.) that *Homer* passes lightly over this miraculous Cure of *Æneas*; because having no other Foundation for its Probability, than the Power of the Gods, and not being mention'd by any other Allegory or Fable, it ought not therefore to have been more fully explain'd. In another Place, where *Homer* would represent the Noise of a Fight and Engagement, between *Hector* commanding the *Trojans*, and *Neptune* defending the *Greeks*, joins together three hyperbolical Comparisons; we read in *Madam D.* (2. 591.) "The Necessity (*says she*) of those Comparisons thus heap'd one upon another, is founded in this, That a Man who is a Poet, does not confine his Imagination to one single Object, but directs it to many:" *i. e.* That *Homer* communicates to us the Perplexities of his jumbling Compositions. Tho' *Madam D.* does not here cite *Eustathius*, yet those who know the good Archbishop of *Thessalonica*, will easily perceive that he has a Share in this Remark. 'Tis as if he had made *Homer* say, I offer you these three Comparisons, because I don't know which is the best. *πόση τις οὖν τι βέλτερον; ὅσην οὐκ ἔχω εἰπεῖν*, p. 994. But all

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his must vanish, when compar'd with the Remark upon a Passage of the 7th B. where *Jupiter* says to *Neptune*, who was jealous of that Wall that was built without a Foundation, and carried up to about the Height of a Man, which the *Greeks* had made, the better to intrench themselves, Your Glory is secure. *Jupiter* does not say to *Neptune*, 'tis *Madam D. who here speaks*, (2. 409.)

“ The Glory of the Wall you have built  
 “ is secure, but your Glory; for indeed  
 “ nothing can eclipse or deface the Glory  
 “ of a Deity : But the Case is not the  
 “ same as to this Wall; *i.e. The Trojan*  
 “ *Ramparts, or the Walls of that famous*  
 “ *Town of Troy.* Their Glory was  
 “ then almost eclipsed and effaced, or  
 “ at least it must have been far inferior  
 “ to that which the *Grecian* Wall must  
 “ have had in all Ages. The Difference  
 “ is obvious; this Wall of *Neptune*, the  
 “ real Wall that actually existed, con-  
 “ tinued but a few Years, and pass'd,  
 “ as *Eustathius* observes, from a Being  
 “ and Existence, to Nothing; whereas  
 “ that which was never built, nor ever  
 “ had any Existence, but in the Poet's  
 “ Imagination, may in a manner be said  
 “ to have pass'd from Nothing to actu-  
 “ al Being and Existence. So true it is  
 “ that



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“ that Poetry gives to its Works and  
“ Compositions a more fix'd, lasting and  
“ permanent Duration, than what the  
“ greatest Princes are able or capable to  
“ give to theirs.” This is certainly a  
way and manner of Reasoning sufficient  
to unravel and unhinge all the Logick  
of the Age. In the Incapacity therefore,  
or rather Impossibility, of which I am con-  
scious to my self I can make no particu-  
lar Reply hereunto, I'll only say in gene-  
ral, That if there's any foreign or external  
Reason confirms me in the bad Opinion  
I have of *Homer*, it is the Praises and  
Encomiums which his Admirers often  
find themselves forc'd and oblig'd to give  
out for him: For indeed it shou'd ap-  
pear to me impossible to be deceiv'd in  
condemning a Poet, who is prais'd from  
such Topicks which can never enter in-  
to the Mind of two different Readers,  
if they did not borrow them from one  
another; which were never employ'd or  
us'd with Respect to any other Author  
whatever; and by the Help and Assist-  
ance of which, 'twere easy to find out  
all the Charms and Beauties of Elo-  
quence and Poetry, in Works, Compo-  
sitions and Writings unworthy to be made  
use of for the Entertainment or Amuse-  
ment of even the very Mob themselves.

C H A P.

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### CHAP. II.

#### *Of the Battles.*

**W**E have already observ'd that the *Iliad*, in a certain View, is nothing but a Series of Battles: Madam D. seems to be of the same Opinion, since she makes it the Business of several of her Remarks, only to illustrate and shew the Use and Beauty of the Methods which *Homer* uses to divert his Reader, who might, says she, soon be tir'd with the Relation of so many Battles, (l. 493.) The Means he uses in the first Passage that gives her Occasion to speak in this Manner, is one of those long Harangues and Speeches which *Homer* puts in the Mouths of several of his Heroes just as they are upon the Point of engaging; and where, that he might avoid being tedious, becomes guilty of the greatest Absurdity, and addeth one to another: But as we intend an entire Chapter expressly upon the Subject of his Harangues and Speeches, we shall wholly refer this Article thither.

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A second Expedient of *Homer*, according to Madam D. is the Variety he gives even to the Battles themselves.

" This Description and Representation  
" is well carried, says she upon a Place  
" in B. 16. (3. 419.) 'Tis surprizing  
" that *Homer*, after having related so  
" many Battles, shou'd yet find so great  
" a Variety, not only as to the several  
" Sorts and different Kinds of Wounds  
" and Falls of dead and dying Persons,  
" but even of Expression : In these Descriptions nothing is resembling, and  
" even the Word *Dying* itself is chang'd  
" after a thousand different Manners."

But first, if according to Mr. D.'s Citation and Testimony from *Eusebnius*, (1 311.) " There is nothing more ridiculous than to change what has  
" been once well exprets'd," *Homer* then is to blame for altering his Expressions, and in not repeating again in the same Terms the self-same Things. Secondly, if *Homer* should by Chance alter some Expressions, yet never did any Person repeat so frequently whole Verses, especially in this Subject of his Relation and Description of Battles ; every Body knows the common Burden of his Song :



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Δούπησεν ὃ πύτων ἀράβησε ὃ πυχὲ ἐπ' αὐτῷ,

And the two others so much resembling one another,

Ὅσσε ὃ νύξ ἐκάλυψε. τὸν ὃ σκότος ὅσσ' ἐκάλυψε.

Thirdly, the Variety of Expressions don't produce the Variety of Objects which a great Poem requires, and even the Difference of the Parts of a humane Body, in which *Homer* makes his Heroes and Persons to be wounded, and of which he sometimes enters into a Detail beyond all Rules of Decency, don't prevent my being tir'd with the general Uniformity of his Battles, as well as with their Number, Length and Multiplicity. This kind of Object, being commonly very confus'd, ought to take up, in my Opinion, but a very small Part of the Poem; and besides, their Variety shou'd have been chiefly plac'd in the sensible and essential Difference of Battles at Land, from those at Sea, of general Battles, from accidental Rencontres, of publick Challenges, and Defiances given, and lastly, from the Attacks and Assaults of fortified Places.

There

upon HOMER'S *Iliad*. 301.

There can't be propos'd either a better varied or more perfect Model upon this Subject than *Tasso*. But tho' the Subject of the *Iliad* naturally presented the same sort of Variety, yet *Homer* seem'd to know nothing but only general Battles, and single Combats.

With Reference to Battles, *B. 4. (p. 149.)* we see the Disposition and Manner of *Nestor*, who plac'd the Cavalry before the Front, and the Infantry behind the Rear: "This was," says *Madam D. (1. 421.)* the Conduct and Disposition that *Homer* esteem'd the best, since he assigns it to *Nestor*." Yet in *B. 11. (p. 166.)* the Infantry is plac'd, by *Agamemnon's* Order, in the Front, and is sustain'd by the Cavalry. "This Order of Battle," says *Madam D. (2. 499.)* is quite contrary to that of *Nestor* in the 4th *B.* for there the Cavalry is in the Front, and is sustain'd by the Infantry; if I may be allow'd here to declare my Opinion, adds *she*, I believe 'twas the near Approach of the Enemy that oblig'd *Agamemnon* to change his Order; he wou'd first force and break their Battalions with his Infantry, and then compleat their Overthrow and Defeat with his Cavalry,

“valry, that might pursue and overtake  
 “so as none should escap’d.” If I  
 might also be allow’d to give my Judgment, *Homer* offers to his Reader the  
 first Thing that presented it self to his  
 Mind or Imagination, and he no more  
 thought of the Honour of *Nestor* than  
 that of *Agamemnon*, nor indeed of his  
 own; for even in this very Passage of  
 B. 11. Madam D. to make her Readers  
 the easier conceive or apprehend the Dis-  
 position and Order of the Troops, is  
 oblig’d to add a Remark to the Text,  
 which, says she, is very obscure. We  
 shall say something elsewhere of the  
 Obscurities of *Homer*; but with Rela-  
 tion to this double Order and Dispo-  
 sition of the Troops, which Madam D.  
 takes such Care to observe, nothing is  
 more indifferent to *Homer* than the Or-  
 der in which he related Things. B. 8.  
 (p. 51.) He there treats of their going  
 out of the Entrenchments to beat back  
 and repulse the *Trojans*; *Diomedes* mar-  
 ches first, *Agamemnon* and *Menelaus* come  
 next, and after them the two *Ajax*’s:  
 According to the Order of Precedence  
 and Dignity, the two *Atrides*’s should  
 have march’d before *Diomedes*; and ac-  
 cording to the Order of Valour and  
 Courage, upon which *Homer* and Ma-  
 dam



upon HOMER's Iliad. 303

dam D. lay great Stress, they ought not to have appear'd till after the great *Ajax*, since Madam D. observes her self in B. 7. (p. 399.) " how great an Honour 'twas for *Agamemnon* to be nam'd " together with *Diomedes* and *Ajax*.

When the Battles and Engagements in the *Iliad* are once begun, we no more see any general Discipline or Conduct; the Officers and Commanders, and even the Generals themselves, then only act as private Soldiers, and distinguish themselves only by the Number of Blows they give, or by the Execution they make; or if there appears any Trace or Shadow of Discipline or Command, they are only Views of so low an Order and Kind, as cou'dnt escape the meanest Genius: As when in B. 17. (p. 80.) " where all the *Trojans* endeavouring to carry off the " Body of *Patroclus*, *Ajax* gives every " where his Orders, and won't suffer " either Officer or Soldier to quit his " Post by advancing or retiring, but " obliges them always to cover the " Body of *Patroclus*, and to stand their " Ground, to secure it from all the " Outrages and Insults design'd by the " *Trojans*." Madam D. says hereupon, (3. 446.) " The only Business here was " to

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“ to preserve the Body of the Prince,  
 “ and every Thing therefore was to  
 “ contribute towards it : This Order  
 “ of *Ajax* therefore shew'd him a very  
 “ wise and experienc'd Captain.” It is  
 a great Question, if his only Business  
 shou'd have been to preserve the Body  
 of *Patroclus*, and whether the *Greeks*  
 hadnt done better if they had otherwise  
 employ'd their Advantage, and endea-  
 vour'd to have gain'd something more  
 important, than the ridiculous Strife  
 with the *Trojans* for the Body of *Patro-*  
*clus* : But tho' it were clear that the  
*Greeks* shou'd have chiefly endeavour'd  
 the preserving this Body, yet the Wis-  
 dom and Experience of a great Captain  
 must shine in another Kind of Manage-  
 ment than this of *Ajax* ; for there is not  
 a Serjeant who in the same Circumstan-  
 ces wou'dnt have given the same Or-  
 ders.

At other Times the Commanders call  
 or get together some Succours ; but this  
 is done in such a Manner, and by such  
 Motives, as discover more Cowardice  
 than Prudence. In B. 13. (p. 282.) *Dei-*  
*phobus*, Son of *Priam*, deliberates with  
 himself, “ whether he shou'd call to his  
 “ Assistance some brave *Trojan*, or whe-  
 “ ther he shou'd singly engage *Idome-*  
 “ *neus* ;

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“ *neus* : After a little Pause, the first  
“ Thought prevail’d as the most safe and  
“ secure ; he therefore goes to find out  
“ *Æneas*, whom he met in the Rear of  
“ the Battalions. *Æneas*, excited by the  
“ Words of *Deiphobus*, marches against  
“ *Idomeneus* with much Boldness and Re-  
“ solution ; *Idomeneus*, seeing him ap-  
“ proach, don’t betake himself to Flight  
“ like a young unexperienc’d Soldier,  
“ but resolutely stands his Ground :  
“ As a furious wild Boar, trusting to  
“ his own Strength and Courage, in  
“ a Desert Place, waits the Approach  
“ of the Dogs and Hunters, advan-  
“ cing upon him with great Noise ;  
“ so the great *Idomeneus* waits the Ap-  
“ proach of the valiant Son of *Anchises*.”  
But by an unaccountable Contradiction,  
after this Relation and Comparison of  
the Poet, “ *Idomeneus* calls together his  
“ Companions *Ascalaphus*, *Aphareus*,  
“ *Deipurus*, *Merion*, and *Antilochus*, all  
“ Captains of equal Valour and Experi-  
“ ence. My Friends, says he to them,  
“ come and assist me ; for I am all a-  
“ lone ; and I see marching against me  
“ the great and terrible *Æneas*, whom  
“ you have so often seen in Battle, all  
“ over cover’d with the Blood of his E-  
“ . X . . . . . “ nemics.



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“nemies. *Æneas*, seeing *Idomeneus*  
 “thus recruited, calls also his Friend  
 “*Deiphobus*, who led up this long Train  
 “of People that he call’d to his Assistance,  
 “and with him *Paris* and *Agenor*, who  
 “fought at the Head of the *Trojans*.”

We may be told on this Occasion, that the Business and Design of a Battle is not to dispute the Victory, according to the Rules of single Combat, for this is even impossible in such a Crowd of Noise and Confusion; and again, that we ought to prefer the Advantage of a whole Nation to any personal Glory, which is of much less Importance. Allowing of these Answers, yet I should advise a young Poet, in such a Case as this before-mention’d, to place his Heroes in a better and more favourable Light, and to change these little Suspicions and Diffidences of a bad Soldier, into the Wisdom and Foresight of a great Captain: In a Word, in this Particular, to imitate all the Poets in the World except *Homer*.

The Accounts and Descriptions of the Battles in the *Iliad*, are almost always wholly taken up in the mentioning particular Circumstances, of which some are even ridiculous; such

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as that of *Midon*, who in B. 5. (p. 212.) fell from his Chariot headlong into a Place where the Sand was soft and deep. "Homer varies so well, says Madam D. hereupon (I. 471.) all the different Situations and Postures of wounded and dying Men, as in this Place to represent the Fall of a Man, who pitching upon his Head in a soft and deep Place, sinks therein up to his Shoulders, his Heels upwards, and is kept there fast by the Weight of his Arms." We meet there also with other Circumstances more largely insisted upon, but which are not less trifling and frivolous; such as the Sport and Play of *Automedon* and *Alcimedon*, mounting one after another the Chariot of *Achilles*, which the Death of *Patroclus* had now left without any Guide. *Automedon* keeps this Chariot, which stood now at some Distance from the Battle,\* and wou'd have brought it back to *Achilles*; "but the immortal Horses, understanding the Death of *Patroclus*, wou'd neither advance nor retire;" and notwithstanding the many and cruel Lashes *Automedon* gave them, which Madam D. spares in her Translation,

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they continue fix'd and immoveable like a strong Column upon a funeral Monument; " but in a Moment after, *Jupiter* " inspires them with invincible Strength " and Force:" *Automedon* falls here in to another Disgrace; for these immortal Horses, taking immediately the Bit in their Teeth, " run with a most swift and " rapid Course into the very Heart of " the *Greek* and *Trojan* Camp; so that " *Automedon* pours down upon the *Batalions* as a ravenous Vulture upon " so many Doves; and flying through " all the Ranks, he both avoids and " pursues the *Trojans* with equal Rapidity and Swiftnefs, (B.17.) This was " done, maugre him, says *Madam D.* on " this Occasion, (3. 449.) for the Horses " run away with him, as he owns himself. Thus, adds *she*, this Particular " is not added to intimate the Youth " and Folly of *Automedon*, but in Praise " and Commendation of the Horses." Tho' *Madam D.* don't here cite *Eustathius*, I am not sorry to inform my Reader, that 'twas he first suggested this Remark, (*Eust. p. 1113.*) because I think it has a near Relation and Affinity with the poor and low Manner of Criticism, the long and laborious Trifling, and the vain Applications of the good Archbishop



upon HOMER's Iliad. 309

bishop of *Thessalonica*: And what indeed is a Man which falls maugre himself upon the Battalions, like as a Vulture upon the Doves? Is this Comparison just? And if he had done it of his own Accord, wou'd it therefore have been an Act of the Heat and Folly of Youth, since the Horses alone, according to the Poet, were capable of putting the *Trojans* to Flight? Moreover, the Poet says expressly in the *Greek*, that *Automedon* help'd and increas'd the Impetuosity of the Horses, *ἰπποῖς αἰσσω*, p. 460. therefore they did'nt carry him off maugre himself. But they'll say, " he's going to answer *Alcimedon*, who might " accuse him of Imprudence; that no " Body cou'd temper or moderate the " Heat and Fury of these ungovernable " Horses; and that this was a Privilege peculiar to *Patroclus*." I don't know how to help it, nor can I hinder *Homer's* contradicting himself. *Automedon*, after having said that none but *Patroclus* cou'd rule or manage these Horses, yet in a flat Contradiction to himself, desires *Alcimedon* to come and take the Reins, " that he himself might descend " to the Engagement." Nothing can be more pleasant than a Dialogue of about 12 Verses long between two Per-

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sons, the one on Foot and the other in a flying Chariot at full Speed. But what does the Reader gain by seeing *Alcimedon* mount the Chariot in the room of *Automedon*, who comes down to fight on Foot? It was *Alcimedon* that ought to have fought on Foot, as he was, and *Automedon* to have remain'd on the Chariot; and this so much the rather, because he was to succeed *Patroclus* in the Office of *Achilles's* Charioteer, (B. 19. p. 173.) or rather, according to the Thought which the Poet suggests, *Alcimedon* shou'd have mounted the Chariot, and fought by *Automedon's* Side, who might have continu'd holding the Reins. Let this be compared with the Variety and Choice of Circumstances, equally natural and extraordinary, which *Livy* presents us with, in the Descriptions he gives of Battles. For, to conclude, it is not entering on this Occasion into a Detail, or particular Enumeration of Circumstances, merely consider'd as such, that we condemn in *Homer*; I'd much sooner censure and condemn those Representations and Descriptions where nothing is finish'd, and where he thought that Multiplicity of Objects might supply the Place of their Perfection: This Way of  
his

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his makes even Brevity and Conciseness it self become tedious; and indeed, a Detail or Enumeration that shou'd take up or extend it self to fifty or sixty Verses, wou'd be less tedious than even ten or twelve, where Things are only mention'd in Hurry and Confusion. I remember on this Occasion the Judgment Madam D. makes of a Verse in *Homer*, compar'd with a Passage in *Xenophon*; the Verse of *Homer* is in B. 10. K. 296.

Ἀμ' φονῶν, ἄν' τελευτῶν, διατ' ἔντεα, καὶ μέλαρ αἶμα.

They march'd through Heaps of Murder, Slaughter, dead Bodies, Blood, and Arms, (B. 10. p. 144.) And the Passage of *Xenophon* in Madam D.'s Translation, which she only took from *Eustathius's* Citation, though she does not name him, and who does not mention the Place whence he took it, is as follows:

" When the Battle was over, a Field  
" of Blood presented your Eyes, cover'd with dead Bodies, and as it  
" were, strow'd with broken Pikes  
" and Swords; some upon the Ground,  
" and others fix'd in the Bodies of  
" Men. But *Homer*, continues *Madam D.* has contain'd all this Image  
" in a single Verse, which expresses a



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“ wonderful Life and Harmony.” I don’t at all condemn *Homer’s* Verse taken singly ; I only say it contains a general Expression and Relation which does not so strongly strike the Imagination, as that related in *Xenophon*, even as it is cited by *Eustathius*, and translated by Madam D. but which appears still yet finer, or much more beautiful in the Original, where the Historian, describing the Defeat of the *Thebans* at *Coronea* by *Ageflaus*, in his Encomium and Character of that Prince, saith, “ When the Combat was ended, “ there was seen the whole Field of Battle, “ overflow’d with Blood ; the Bodies of “ Friends and Enemies extended, and “ lying one upon the other ; Bucklers “ pierc’d, Spears and Launces broken ; “ naked Swords either lying upon the “ Ground, stuck deep in the Bodies of “ the Dead, or yet held fast and grasp’d “ in the Hands of the Soldiers.” Setting aside all Prejudice and Prepossession whatever, a History writ in the Stile and Manner of this Passage in *Xenophon*, will be more read and esteem’d, than a Poem writ in the Stile of that Verse of *Homer*. I am not at all against the Objection of a tedious Detail, which we should avoid. Impartial Readers will soon judge that

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that I am not for carrying things from one Extream to another. I shall add, that making all Sorts of Descriptions, but especially those of Battles, in a judicious and well-chosen Detail, as I advise, all the Battles of a Poem ought never to swell any way near the intolerable Length of those of *Homer*, when taken altogether.

But the greatest Absurdity of all in the Battles of the *Iliad*, is the Part which the Gods there act: This is an Observation we must add to all the rest we have already made above, concerning the Deities. *Homer* himself has begun his own Censure and Condemnation upon this Occasion. *Apollo*, B. 21. (p. 237.) says to *Neptune*: "You might think me very rash, foolish or mad, if I shou'd enter the List with you, for the sake of miserable Mortals." And this even in the very Book which abounds with this Sort of Battles. I have observed elsewhere, that *Homer* was the greatest Enemy to his own Heroes, but most of all to himself: He took no manner of Care to prevent the discovering all the Absurdities of his Poem; he not only never covers nor conceals any with the Art and Skill of a Poet, but even sometimes pub-

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publishes and discovers them himself with the utmost Simplicity and Folly: The Gods not only fight against one another in favour of Men, but even against poor Mortals themselves, who wound and put them to flight. Yet as *Homer* has some sublime and emphatical Verses and Lines in Praise of his Gods, so the whole taken together composes a surprising and astonishing Medly, Inconsistency and Contradiction: And he has sometimes taken a few inconsistent Lines, and placed them just by one another. *Menelaus*, for Instance, in B. 17. (p. 64.) seeing *Hector* defended and supported by *Apollo*, march against him, says,  
 “ Whenever a Mortal is so bold as to  
 “ ingage another Man, who is assisted  
 “ by the powerful Arm of a Deity, he runs  
 “ headlong to his own Destruction, and  
 “ soon receives the Punishment due to  
 “ his Rashness and Folly. *And immediately after*, But if I heard, near me,  
 “ the Voice of valiant and couragious  
 “ *Ajax*, we should both stand our  
 “ Ground and fight, tho’ against a God.  
 “ On the other Hand, *Hector*, upon  
 “ whose Account *Madam D.* says (2.  
 “ 591.) what Greatness is express’d in  
 “ this Image that *Homer* makes, in thus  
 “ opposing *Hector* to *Neptune*, and there-  
 “ by



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“ by equalling him to that God”; yet  
“ this same *Hector*, as if he would bat-  
“ tle and contradict both *Homer's* Image  
“ and Madam D.'s Exclamation, says,  
“ B. 20. p. 197.) If nothing was want-  
“ ing or requisite to speak or harangue,  
“ I wou'd engage even against the im-  
“ mortal Powers themselves ; but with  
“ a Pike in my Hand, I should quickly  
“ be punish'd for my Rashness and Fol-  
“ ly, for the Gods are much stronger  
“ than Men.

In B. 20. (p. 184.) *Juno* says to *Nep-  
tune* and *Pallas*; “ Let us inform *Achilles*  
“ of what we are going to do in his Fa-  
“ vour ; else as soon as he sees any of  
“ the Tutelar Deities of the *Trojans* ap-  
“ pear for them against him, he will be  
“ struck with a pannick Fear.” Upon  
this Occasion Madam D. observes, (3.  
514.) “ That *Homer* always ascribes to  
“ *Achilles* a Sort of Religion that may  
“ be consistent with his peculiar Cha-  
“ racter.” This Religion here consists  
in making him susceptible or capable of  
Fear, at the Sight of the Gods ; yet, with-  
out going further backward than the pre-  
ceding Page, (513.) upon Occasion of a  
a Passage where *Homer* makes *Achilles*  
impatient to spill the Blood of *Hector*,  
even in the very Presence of *Mars*, his  
Tutelar

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Tutelar Deity, Madam D. says, "Here  
 " are indeed Strokes worthy the Cha-  
 " racter of *Achilles*; he would kill  
 " *Hector*; but this was not enough; he  
 " wou'd even kill him in the Presence  
 " of *Mars* himself, and maugre the Pro-  
 " tection of this his Tutelar Deity."  
 Here then all his Religion vanishes. Fur-  
 ther, Did not *Ajax*, in B. 15. resist *Hec-*  
*tor*, tho' defended by *Apollo*, (p. 370.)  
 And did not *Diomedes*, in B. 5. put to  
 Flight *Mars* and *Venus*, the Tutelar Dei-  
 ties of *Troy*? Why then does *Juno* say,  
 that *Achilles* wou'd be struck with Ter-  
 ror at the Sight of them?

I shou'd be of another Opinion, if *Ju-*  
*piter* himself shou'd oppose the Enter-  
 prize of any Hero; for to resist him I  
 shou'd think an Instance of the greatest  
 Impiety and Folly; Yet, whether *Ho-*  
*mer's* Heroes fly before him, or resist  
*Jupiter*, Madam D. still finds some Rea-  
 son or other to praise them. "The  
 " *Greeks*, says *Homer*, (B. 8. p. 39.) see-  
 " ing the Heavens on fire, and *Jupiter*  
 " arm'd against them with his Thunder  
 " and Lightning, are struck with Ter-  
 " ror, and run away. Neither *Idomeneus*,  
 " *Agamemnon*, nor the two *Ajaxes* have  
 " the Resolution to stand their Ground".  
 All the greatest Heroes of the *Grecian*  
 Army

upon HOMER'S Iliad. 317

Army fly, says Madam D. (2. 415.) but they fly before *Jupiter*. *Nestor*, the strongest Bulwark of the *Grecian Army*, continues Homer, "only remain'd, but against his Will; for he cou'd not fly like the rest, since *Paris* had wounded one of his Horses". In this Passage, adds Madam D. "One may perceive a wonderful Address and Skill in *Homer*; to shew that his Heroes Flight on this Occasion, was no way mean or infamous, he justifies *Nestor* for not having fled as the rest. He says then that he remain'd unwillingly, and he gives the Reason of it". What Skill and Art is this? This wounded Horse that prevented *Nestor*'s Flight, brings to my Remembrance a Passage in B. 13. (p. 286.) where *Homer* says, "That *Idomeneus* becoming heavy and slow, thro' Age, and not being light and nimble enough to hasten his Flight, made a slow and leisure Retreat, parrying all the Arrows that were shower'd down upon him." What a Happiness was old Age to this Gentleman, since this gave such a Grace and Beauty to his Actions? If he had had the Vigour of Youth and Strength, he would have fled with all Speed. But notwithstanding the Reason here given



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given for excusing *Nestor's* not flying from the Presence of *Jupiter*, I see on the other Side, that *Diomedes* is commended for having long resisted this God. In the general Overthrow and Defeat, caus'd by *Jupiter* himself, says Madam D. in the same B. 8. (2. 416.) “ *Diomedes* was  
 “ the only Person who did not fly :  
 “ Wherein *Homer* admirably observes  
 “ the Character he had given this Hero.  
 “ *Diomedes*, who had already been attack'd by *Apollo* in the last Battle, and  
 “ had three Times return'd to the  
 “ Charge against that Deity, is not so  
 “ soon put to Flight ; he must first give  
 “ Proofs worthy his Courage, and see  
 “ the Thunder fall at his Feet ; and  
 “ even after all this, the Counsel and  
 “ Wisdom of *Nestor* is necessary to make  
 “ him resolve upon flying, and making  
 “ his Escape. All this is conducted  
 “ and managed with a great deal of Art.  
 “ Cou'd we expect less, continues Madam D. (*ibid.* 417.) from the bold  
 “ and terrible Character that *Homer* had  
 “ given *Diomedes*, who was not terrified even by the Thundering of *Jupiter* himself : *Diomedes*, adds she, at  
 “ the Bottom of the same Page, (417.)  
 “ even after the Thunder of *Jupiter* fell  
 “ at his Feet, would never have consented

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“ sented to fly, without *Nestor's* per-  
“ swading and importuning him thereto.  
“ *Diomedes*, says *she*, (418.) after  
“ some Deliberation, determined to  
“ march against *Hector*; to hinder which,  
“ *Jupiter* found it necessary to engage  
“ and repulse him three several Times.  
“ Let me stop here a little, continues *she*,  
“ the better to explain the Beauty of  
“ these Characters, because there is not  
“ the least Stroke contain'd in them,  
“ which does not deserve particularly to  
“ be studied; and that this is the Part  
“ wherein Poets generally most fail, for  
“ want of having sufficiently consider'd  
“ these excellent Originals, which are  
“ only capable of directing and con-  
“ ducting them aright.” But instead of  
all these Remarks of Madam D. I shou'd  
have thought this whole Subject might  
have been dispatch'd in one Word. If  
Thunder, in *Homer*, signifies only a na-  
tural Effect, or is only an equivocal and  
ambiguous Omen, as it seems to be by  
a Passage in B. 15. (p. 368.) where the  
*Trojans* falsely explain and apply it in  
their own Favour; *Agamemnon*, *Nestor*,  
*Idomeneus*, and the two *Ajaxes*, shew  
themselves Cowards in flying, especially  
in such Fright and Confusion, as that  
*Homer* attributes to them, (B. 8. p. 39,  
and

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and 42.) but if Thunder was a manifest Sign of the contrary Will and Pleasure of *Jupiter*, *Diomedes* is then a mad, or rather impious Person, not to retire till a more favourable Opportunity. 'Tis rather to omit nothing unmentioned, than to say here any thing necessary, that I stop a Moment to shew the Difference between this Resistance of *Diomedes* to *Jupiter*, from that of *Jacob* wrestling with the Angel, which is on this Occasion in *Madam D's Preface*, (p. 15.) for it appears clearly from the Text of Scripture, that this Wrestling was an advantagious Sign and Proof to *Jacob* himself, and a Type and Symbol of the Success, that the Zeal and Ardency of his Prayers, had with God: In the same Manner as is said in the Gospel, (*Matth. xi. 12.*) *That the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth Violence, and the Violent take it by Force.* Has this any Analogy or Resemblance with *Diomedes's* Resistance, which is done in Contempt of *Jupiter*; and which, according to the Rules of good Sense, ought upon the Spot to have been punished with immediate Death?

However this is, they say these excellent Originals describe and represent *Diomedes* as such an one, and so fix and establish




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establiſh his Character. I once was of the ſame Opinion; but then preſently reflecting upon that Variation and Diſorder of Judgment of the excellent Original, I was almoſt ſure in ſome Place or other to find *Diomedes*, in his Turn, a Coward like all the reſt After a ſhort Enquiry, I was never more ſurpriz'd, than to ſee to what Height the Poet had carry'd his Cowardice in B. 5. where yet this Hero does ſo many Wonders, "*Diomedes* (B. 5. p. 213.) ſeeing "*Hector* attended by the God *Mars*, "*was ſtruck with Fear; like an unex-* "*perienc'd Perſon, when firſt he goes* "*out of his own Country, and who,* "*after having paſſ'd over much* "*Ground, meets on a ſudden with a* "*River, (which impetuoſly rowling* "*its foaming Waves, carries the Noiſe* "*of its Waters to the Ocean,) ſtops* "*ſhort with a Surprize, and returns* "*back. In the ſame Manner does the* "*Son of *Tydeus* retire back, and ad-* "*dreſſing himſelf thus to his Troops,* "*ſays to them: It is not without Rea-* "*ſon, my Friends, that we are ſo much* "*frighten'd at the Valour of the great* "**Hector*; he has always near him* "*ſome one of the immortal Powers* "*who protects him, and removes all*

Y

" Dangers



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“ Dangers far from him : At this very  
 “ Moment that I now speak to you, he  
 “ is attended with the terrible God of  
 “ Battles, under the Shape of a Mortal.”

I can easily conceive that *Mars* is capable of infusing Fear into any Mortal, and that even the most sudden Retreat is not always worthy of Blame : But why shou'd he chuse Words that have been always appropriated to express the utmost Cowardice, *struck with Terror, affrighted at the Valour of the great Hector* ? Why does he aggravate all this by a Comparison so ignominious for a Hero, and entirely contrary to the peculiar Merit and Excellence of an Officer ; a *Man without all Experience, that has just for the first Time left his own Country* ? But let's here consider and admire the just Agreement and Harmony of *Homer's* Ideas. *Diomedes* trembles and retires at the Sight of *Mars*, one of the inferior Deities representing Vice ; and yet had it not been for *Nestor* he would not have fled from the Presence of *Jupiter*, the greatest and Chief of the Gods, and the Representative of the true and only God.

*Homer* has another Method of making the Flight of his Heroes appear not dishonourable, which is by supposing that  
*Jupiter*

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*Jupiter* infus'd Terror into their Minds. *Ajax* himself is an Instance of this Manner and Fancy of *Homer*. "*Jupiter* from the highest Heavens, infuses Fear into the Heart of the Son of *Te-lamon*, (B. 11. 199.) Madam *D.* says hereupon, (2. 514.) "What would not *Ajax* have done, if *Jupiter* had not oppos'd himself to his Courage, and infus'd Terror into his Heart?" *i. e.* How very bold had he been, if he had not been afraid? After all, if *Homer* would have been useful to the *Greeks*, and particularly with Respect to their Wars, he shou'd never have suggested the Notion of *Jupiter's* ever infusing Fear or Terror into the Souls of Men; which may be a Pretence even much more pernicious to the Troops than that of Thunder, even when consider'd as a bad or unlucky Omen; for Thunder is something so sensible, as cannot be falsely alledg'd or pretended. Soldiers need only pretend that *Jupiter* infus'd Terror into their Souls, which will not only excuse, but even justify their Flight; yet *Homer* himself makes *Ulysses* pronounce a decisive Sentence against all those that in the least listen'd or had any Regard to such Terror; for *Ulysses* thus speaks, (B. 11. 191.) "Behold *Jupiter* has struck



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“ Terror into the Hearts of all the  
 “ *Greeks*; but what signifies it; I even  
 “ reproach my self for having so much as  
 “ deliberated: Don’t it suffice to know  
 “ that only Cowards can fly, and that  
 “ every Man of Courage shou’d stand  
 “ his Ground, and not consider Dan-  
 “ gers?” Madam D. does not fail to  
 remark upon this Occasion (2. 510.)  
 “ That one can’t better paint what a  
 “ Man of great Courage ought to think  
 “ and speak in so great and imminent  
 “ Danger; yet *Ulysses*, who so far con-  
 “ temns this infus’d Fear, was himself  
 “ mightily afraid of Thunder; for in  
 “ B. 8. (p. 40.) *Diomedes* calls upon  
 “ him with all his Force and Strength,  
 “ Whither do you fly, you Son of *La-*  
 “ *ertes*? What! do you turn your Back?  
 “ Are you not afraid that one or other  
 “ should run you through in your  
 “ Flight? What Infamy and Disgrace  
 “ will this bring upon you? Stop a lit-  
 “ tle and stand your Ground, that so  
 “ we may save the wise *Nestor* from the  
 “ Hands of a cruel Enemy. He says  
 “ this, but his Words were not heard or  
 “ regarded: *Ulysses*, driven by the Fright  
 “ of a sudden and unexpected Clap of  
 “ Thunder, flies and goes into the Ships.”  
*Homer’s* Style, as you see, is no less a  
 favour-

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favourable Wind to hasten and precipitate the Flight of his Heroes, than to heighten and exalt the Ardour of their Courage and Valour, to use the Expression of *Longinus*, Ch. 7. Madam D. (3. 410.) says, " With Reference to *Ajax*, who yielded to *Jupiter* and the *Trojans*, the better to preserve the Honour of this Hero, *Homer* here measures his very Terms and Expressions, and does not say that he retir'd or fled, but only that he mov'd himself from the Strokes and Attacks that were intended him." Why then don't he also endeavour a little to preserve and maintain the Honour of the other Heroes in the like Juncture? He palliates and softens (3. 438.) the Flight of *Menelaus*; why don't he also that of *Ulysses*, who was so much superior to *Menelaus*? Upon the whole, it appears that Madam D. inclines to favour Courage, tho' against *Jupiter* himself; for I find this Remark in B. 15. (2. 608.) "*Homer*, to exalt the Valour of *Hector*, gives him *Neptune* for an Antagonist; and, to set off that of *Ajax*, he had before oppos'd to him *Hector*, supported and defended by *Apollo*; and here he even opposes to him *Jupiter* himself. These are indeed the Strokes

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" of a great Master." Why then does Madam D. in her B. of the *Corruption of Taste*, p. 552. vindicate *Ajax* for having made a Challenge to *Jupiter*. It is true, that the Words in the Original of *Homer*, *Make us perish*, don't so clearly express this Challenge, as those of Mr. *Boileau* and Mr. *de la Motte*, *And fight against us* : " But the Thought of *Ajax*, tho' but faintly express'd in " the *Greek*, so naturally implies this " Challenge, that even *Longinus* himself " understood it so; since in his Para- " phrase thereof, cited and translated " by Madam D. (3. 453.) he says, that " provided the Day would but appear, " *Ajax* was very certain of making an " End worthy of his great Courage, " even tho' *Jupiter himself should oppose " his Attempts and Endeavours*.

But the great Inconvenience that happens from this Opposition of Men to the Gods, is that of investing them with a chimerical Greatness; which pours Infamy and Contempt upon the Deities. Observe the Ignominy of *Mars* flying before *Diomedes* in B. 5. and saying to *Jupiter*, (234.) " All my Swiftnefs and Agility " had much ado to save me." F. *Rapin* \*

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\* *(comparison of Homer and Virgil.*



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owns, upon Occasion of this Passage,  
 " that *Homer* wou'd excite our Pity,  
 " were it not for the Respect with which  
 " the Learned are prepossess'd for the  
 " Greatness of his Genius." Madam  
*D.* remarks, (1. 456.) that Pity was not  
 the Character of *Mars*. Was flying be-  
 fore an Enemy then any Part of his  
 Character? As for me, when in the  
*Iliad* I see *Achilles*, \* *Ajax*, † and *Hector* ‡  
 advancing like terrible valiant *Mars*, I  
 am ready always to say they are going  
 to fly like their Patron, and it often  
 happens accordingly. My Conjectures  
 are true, even the Gods themselves in-  
 spire with Cowardice the Heroes they  
 favour. *Hector* in B. 20. (p. 198.) was  
 ready to do Wonders: " He said to his  
 " Soldiers, Tho' the Hands of *Achilles*  
 " were as Fire, and his Courage like  
 " burning Steel, yet I wou'd find him  
 " out and engage him. In that Mo-  
 " ment, adds the Poet, *Apollo* approaches  
 " *Hector*, and says to him, *Hector* pre-  
 " tend not singly to engage *Achilles* at  
 " the Head of the Troops, but be con-  
 " tented to resist his Effort in the  
 " Midst of your Battalions; you are  
 " lost if you approach him. *Hector*

\* B. 22. p. 159.

† B. 7. p. 14.

‡ B. 11. p. 183.

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“knew the Voice of this Deity, and  
 “struck with Fear, retires to the Cen-  
 “tre of his Army.” Madam D. has  
 therefore some Reason to affirm, (2. 501.)  
 “That the Retreat of the Deities turns  
 “to the Glory and Advantage of the  
 “Heroes;” for if *Apollo* had retired,  
*Hector* had acquitted himself much  
 better: The whole *Iliad* is full of such  
 Examples, which have all some pecu-  
 liar Absurdity; but the Subject over-  
 whelming me by its Number and Great-  
 ness, obliges me only to desire the  
 Reader to be aware of it when he reads  
*Homer* after my Criticism.

With Respect to Duels, or single  
 Combats, we have already examin’d in  
 the Second Part of this Work that be-  
 tween *Ajax* and *Hector*; we have also  
 made some Remarks upon that between  
*Hector* and *Patroclus*, which is no where a  
 real Combat, but in the following Com-  
 parison of the Poet: “As a Lyon, says  
 “*Homer*, (B. 16. p. 51.) who after  
 “having travers’d over high Moun-  
 “tains, scorch’d by the Heat of the  
 “Sun, without finding the Relief of  
 “any refreshing River, meets all of a  
 “sudden, near a Spring, a furious wild  
 “Boar, who with his open Mouth yet  
 “stain’d with the Blood of Beasts that  
 “he

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“ he had devour'd, was seeking after the  
“ same Refreshment; the Spring being  
“ too little to supply them both, they  
“ charge one another with equal Fury,  
“ and at last the Lyon, after divers At-  
“ tacks, vanquishes his Enemy, and beats  
“ him to the Ground: In the same  
“ Manner does *Hector* fall upon the Son  
“ of *Menætius*.” But trust not to this  
Comparison, which would make you  
believe that *Hector* and *Patroclus* had vi-  
gorously charg'd and attack'd one ano-  
ther; for the whole Affair really pass'd  
in the following Manner. “ *Patroclus*,  
(*ibid.* p. 49.) “ whose Fury increas'd  
“ each Moment, like that of the God  
“ *Mars*, had thrice engag'd the Enemy,  
“ and made a terrible Destruction a-  
“ mong them: In each of these At-  
“ tacks he kill'd with his own Hands  
“ nine Heroes; encourag'd and puff'd  
“ up with this Success, and insatiable  
“ of Blood, he engag'd them a fourth  
“ Time; but now, generous *Patroclus*,  
“ says the Poet, making an *Apostrophe* to  
“ him, the End of your Life draws  
“ near; the terrible *Apolla* marches in-  
“ visibly against you through the  
“ Troops; for he was wrapt up in  
“ a thick Cloud; he steps behind *Pa-*  
“ *troclus*, and strikes him with the  
“ Palm



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“ Palm of his Hand on the Back, be-  
 “ tween the two Shoulders; a Dizzi-  
 “ ness possesses him that Instant, and  
 “ his Eyes grow dim; *Apollo* loosens  
 “ his Helmet, which falls down to his  
 “ Horse's Feet. *Patroclus*' Pike, tho' so  
 “ strong, heavy and guarded with Steel,  
 “ broke in his Hands; his Buckler which  
 “ cover'd him all over, falls down at  
 “ his Feet; and *Apollo* himself deprives  
 “ him of his Breast-plate. Then all of  
 “ a sudden Fear and Astonishment seiz'd  
 “ his Spirits, his Strength forsakes him,  
 “ and he becomes immoveable. A *Bar-*  
 “ *danian*, taking Advantage of this Op-  
 “ portunity, draws near and strikes him  
 “ with a Javelin between the Shoulders.  
 “ It was the valiant *Euphorbus*, Son of  
 “ *Panthous*, who in Strength, Courage,  
 “ and Dexterity to drive a Chariot, and  
 “ Swiftnefs, excell'd all his Compani-  
 “ ons, and whose first Exploits in War  
 “ had made him famous, by the Death  
 “ of twenty Warriors, whom in the Heat  
 “ of Battle he had thrown headlong  
 “ from their Chariots. 'Twas he, ge-  
 “ neros *Patroclus*, who first wounded  
 “ you; but he had not the Glory to fi-  
 “ nish the Conquest; an Action far a-  
 “ bove his Strength; for immediately  
 “ drawing out his Javelin, he run back  
 “ to

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“ to his Battalion, and had not the  
“ Courage to attend *Patroclus*, tho’ na-  
“ ked and disarmed.” Madam D. says  
hereupon, (3. 431.) “ The Poet raises  
“ the Valour of *Euphorbus*, to do the  
“ greater Honour to *Patroclus*: None  
“ but a Hero durst approach him.” Our  
common Soldiers would not admit such  
a Hero among them, as durst not en-  
gage a disarm’d Man. “ The Son of  
“ *Menæti*us, adds Homer, who now  
“ found himself subdued by the Hand  
“ of *Apollo*, and weakened with his  
“ Wound, to avoid Death, endeavours  
“ to get up with his *Thessalian* Army.  
“ *Hector* seeing this Hero retire from  
“ the Battle, dangerously wounded,  
“ crosses all the Ranks, and drawing  
“ near him, runs him through with his  
“ Pike. *Patroclus* falls with great Noise,  
“ which overwhelms all the *Greeks* with  
“ deep Sorrow and Lamentation for so  
“ great a Loss.” This was the gallant  
Manner that *Hector* kill’d *Patroclus*, and  
with which *Patroclus* admirably re-  
proaches him just as he was expiring,  
(p. 53.) “ The Son of *Latona*, assisted  
“ by my cruel Fate, hath deprived me  
“ of Life; *Euphorbus* came after him,  
“ and You are now the Third.” Yet  
it is to this that *Homer* applies his Com-  
parison

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parison of the Lyon and wild Boar, who fought a long Time near a Spring, meaning *Hector* by the Lyon, and *Patroclus* by the wild Boar, tho' Madam D. (3. 432.) attributes to *Patroclus* a Courage much superiour to that of *Hector*; but yet we must own in *Homer's* Behalf, that the Error in natural History, concerning the wild Boar's devouring Beasts, is not in the Text; and that it is owing only to the Care which Madam D. has taken, throughout the whole of her Performances, still to beautify *Homer's* Stile and Expression.

The last Censure shall be that of the Combat between *Achilles* and *Hector*, which is indeed the longest and the most vicious in the whole Poem. Yet I will begin it with justifying *Homer* in one Particular, viz. as to *Achilles'* forbidding the *Greeks* falling upon *Hector* while he pursued him. But this Vindication of him will have this Peculiar, that whereas Madam D. thinks she has justify'd *Homer* in this Particular against the Moderns, I shall vindicate him against *Aristotle* and herself. *Aristotle*, quoted by Madam D. (3. 553.) speaks thus; "The Wonderful and Miraculous must be introduced in Tragedy; but much more in Epick Poetry, which proceeds



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“ceeds in this even to what may appear  
“irrational: For as in an Epick Poem  
“we don't see the Persons that act, all  
“that passes and transcends the Bounds  
“of ordinary Reason, is very proper to  
“produce therein the Sublime and Mi-  
“raculous. For Example, what *Homer*  
“says of *Hector*, pursued by *Achilles*,  
“would be ridiculous upon the Stage;  
“for one could not help laughing, to  
“see on one Hand the *Greeks* stand still,  
“without any Motion, and *Achilles* on  
“the other pursuing *Hector*, and ma-  
“king Signs to the Troops not to fall  
“upon him; but this does not appear  
“in an Epick Poem.” Hereupon I af-  
firm, that neither in Tragedy, nor in a-  
ny other sort of Poetry, we should e-  
steem it ridiculous for *Achilles* to give  
Signal to his Troops not to fall upon  
*Hector*, who was now out of the Army,  
and who was now engaged with him up-  
on the Foot of a single Combat: On the  
contrary, we should esteem it mean and  
infamous to the last Degree, for *Achilles*  
to permit the *Greek* Army to give him  
the least Assistance in a Combat, where,  
by his own Prowess, and the Assistance  
of *Minerva*, he had so great a Superio-  
rity over his Adversary, who was here  
forsaken both by Gods and Men. My  
Vin-

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Vindication of *Homer* then against *Aristotle* and *Madam D.* consists in saying, that they do *Homer* an Injury, to call a Passage that is agreable to the most common and allow'd Laws of Decorum, an unreasonable Piece of Miraculous or Sublime; as also for justifying him in a Particular he could not treat otherwise, and against which I really believe there never was another Objection, but this which they are here pleased to forge. Thus when *Madam D.* says, upon Occasion of this Passage (3. 554.) " That " what I esteem ridiculous and absurd in " *Homer*, is accounted sublime and wonderful by *Aristotle*, who also gives the " Reason thereof;" I don't know who it is she means, nor do I care to know, for he could only be a Fool: All I know, is, that the Epick Poets have in this Particular imitated *Homer*, and that no Person ever blamed them. *Virgil*, (B. 10.) makes *Turnus* take the same Precaution, when he goes to attack *Pallas*.

*Ut vidit Socios ; tempus desistere pugna,  
Solus ego in Pallanta feror, Sulos mihi  
Pallas  
Debetur.*

And

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And in (B. 12.) when he goes to attack  
*Aeneas*,

*Parcite Iam Rutuli, & vos tela inhibete  
Latini.*

Even in *Tasso*, who is a Modern, *Tan-  
crede* preparing to engage *Argant*. (Canto  
19. St. 5.)

*Si volge a i suoi,  
E fa retrargli de l'offesa.*

But in this last Poet, who has carry'd  
to the greatest Height, the Grandeur and  
Sublime of his Characters, *Tancred* does  
this not so much from any Principle of  
Pride, as *Achilles* and *Turnus*, but from  
a Principle of Honour, which forbids  
him to attack his Enemy with the least  
Advantage, which makes him throw  
away his Buckler, (*ibid.* St. 9.) when  
he sees *Argant* has none. What sur-  
prises me somewhat more, is, that the  
*Trojans* don't fall upon *Achilles*, to de-  
fend *Hector*, who had not forbid or re-  
fused their Assistance. But if the Ab-  
surd and Unreasonable, mention'd in this  
Passage of *Aristotle*, has not so much re-  
ference to *Achilles*' his Commands and  
Prohibition, as to *Hector*'s flying; in  
this



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this Case, I must own that the Unreasonableness and Absurdity of the *Iliad* is carry'd to its greatest Height, whether with Reference to the Decorum of the Character, or the Possibility of the Fact, and then I agree that the Moderns have Reason to treat this Flight as ridiculous and absurd, notwithstanding all *Aristotle's* Reasons to the contrary.

But what sullies all the Glory that *Achilles* might have acquired, by his forbidding the *Greeks* falling upon *Hector* on this Occasion, is the Assistance which he accepts from *Minerva*; only we have observed elsewhere, that this Assistance consists only in Trick and Cheat, and that thus *Homer* debases his Deities even in their Acts of giving Succour and Protection, which are the noblest belonging to the supreme Powers: I only here reflect and criticise it with Respect to *Achilles*, whom it so much disgraces, consider'd as a Hero. *F. Bossu* has taken up the whole 6th Chapter of his 5th B. to justify this Fiction. *Madam D.* adopts his Doctrine, and gives us the whole in Epitome, in a Remark of the 3d Vol. (p. 556.) "*Achilles*, says she, refused Assistance of the Troops to conquer *Hector*, but did not that of *Minerva*. Hereby *Homer* would intimate, that  
" all

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“ all the Strength of Men is deriv'd  
“ from God, that their Courage fails  
“ when he abandons them, and that the  
“ Assistance of a Deity is so far from dis-  
“ gracing, or in the least tarnishing  
“ the Brightness of the Hero he fa-  
“ vours, that on the contrary it raises  
“ and exalts his Glory, as much as that  
“ of Men eclipses and destroys it.”

But if 'tis so, why does Madam D. say  
upon Occasion of a Passage in B. 5. (p.  
171.) where *Minerva* withdraws from  
the *Greeks*, (1. 438.) “ That *Homer*  
“ exalts and raises their Glory, by ma-  
“ king it appear, that even without the  
“ Help of the Gods, they knew how to  
“ conquer?” Why does she take so much  
Pains to shew us the Equality, that she  
says *Homer* had put between the Force  
and Prowess of *Hector* and *Achilles*, by  
making *Achilles*' first Arms fall into  
*Hector*'s Hands; which, having been  
made by a God, were impenetrable as  
well as the Second? “ Were it not for  
“ this, says she, (3. 438.) one might  
“ object that *Achilles* should never have  
“ killed *Hector*, but only because his  
“ Arms were made with the Hands of a  
“ God, and those of *Hector* by the  
“ Hands of a Man; whereas now both  
“ being equally the Workmanship of

Z

“ *Vulcan*.

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"*Vulcan*, the Victory of *Achilles* appears compleat, and in its full Lustre." To this Objection, Madam D. wou'd have answer'd, that the divine Arms given only to *Achilles*, signify that all the Strength of Men proceeds from God; and that this supernatural Assistance is so far from destroying the Glory of *Achilles*, that it rather raises and exalts it. But then how comes it to pass, that we who are shock'd with the Advantage *Achilles* derives from the Assistance of *Minerva*, why are we charm'd, in the Opera of *Perseus*, in seeing the different Succours the Deities give this Hero, to cause him to triumph over *Medusa*? The Reason is evident; 'tis because these Exploits are of themselves beyond all human Force and Power, and that the Regard which the Gods shew this Hero, intimate in Effect his Vertue and Merit, according to the following Lines in *Corneille's Andromeda*, quoted by F. Boffu. 'Tis there *Cassiope*, Mother to *Andromeda*, speaking to *Phineus*, Rival to *Perseus*,

*Le Ciel, qui mieux que nous, connoit ce  
que nous Sommes,  
Mesure les faveurs au mérite des Hom-  
mes :*

*Et*



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*Et d'un Pariel Secours vous Auriez en  
l'appui,*

*S'il eût pu voir en vous mêmes vertus qu'en  
luy.*

*Ce sont Graces d'en haut rares, & singu-  
lières,*

*Qui n'en descendent point pour des ames  
vulgaires.*

Did *Achilles*, who was both impious and foolish, deserve this Protection from Wisdom it self? Besides, this Succour and Assistance of the Gods don't hinder *Perseus* from being obliged to arm himself with an extraordinary Courage and Valour, in order to succeed in his Enterprize. This is extremely well express'd, by *Mercury's* Discourse to this Hero, in *Quinault's* Opera.

*Je vous laisse au milieu d'un péril redou-  
table,*

*Je ne puis plus rien pour vos jours :*

*Cherchez vostre dernier secours,*

*Dans un courage inébranlable.*

There is nothing like this in the Combat between *Achilles* and *Hector*. The natural and ordinary Superiority of the First over the Second, is so very great, that to have given the Reader any Plea-

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sure, he ought to have given all the Succour to *Hector's* Side alone, against *Achilles*, supposing him even naked and unarm'd.

Those that would more effectually defend *Homer*, in a more sensible Manner than Madam D. does, may perhaps say, that if *Achilles* has *Minerva* on his Side, *Apollo* fights also for *Hector*. But *Homer* himself destroys this Apology, by the Nature of the Assistance which *Apollo* gives to *Hector*. "Could he, says the Poet, (*B. 22. p. 263.*) "so long have resisted, and escap'd the Death that threatn'd him, if *Apollo* had not at last approach'd him, increas'd his Strength, and given him fresh Support?" Madam D. (*3. 553.*) says upon this Passage: "*Homer* here prevents the Objection that might be made, how *Hector*, who was not so nimble and active as *Achilles*, &c. could escape his Enemy, who with his natural Agility had also divine Armour, which rendered him yet more light? The Reason is, that *Apollo* came now the last Time to his Assistance." What is particular in this Explication of *Homer*, is, that he don't give it us till four Pages after the Description of the Flight, which occasioned the Objection; whereas the least Degree

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gree of Common Sense, might easily have prevented it. In a Word, 'tis not the Fiction of the Assistance and Interposition of the Deities we condemn in *Homer*, but that gross and shocking Turn he gives it, by which at the same Time he dishonours both his Gods and Heroes. And indeed, to apply here an Observation that agrees to several other Passages in *Homer*; Quotations from other Poets are produced but in vain, or even Historical Facts, that at first Sight may seem to justify certain Ideas in *Homer*. I find on the contrary, that nothing does him more Prejudice; for if these Poetical Passages, or Historical Facts, are beautiful in other Authors, *Homer* is very unhappy for having render'd them disagreeable in his Work. But every Thing is permitted Writers of an establish'd Fame and Character, and every Thing liable to Censure in such who are otherwise.

After the Battles, succeeds the barbarous Custom of stripping of the Dead. Madam D. upon Occasion of a Passage in B. II. where *Diomedes* is wounded, as he was violently seizing the Breast-plate of *Agastrophus*, says after *Eustathius*, (2.508.) " That *Homer*, the better " to instruct us that nothing is so im-  
" pertinent and unseasonable, as, during



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“ the Battle, to suffer our selves to be  
 “ imploy’d with plundering the Enemy,  
 “ feigns, that all the Heroes who thus  
 “ stopp’d in their Career to carry off  
 “ the Arms or Booty of those they had  
 “ slain, were commonly wounded in the  
 “ Action.” If this Observation had pro-  
 ceeded from any other Authors besides  
*Eustathius* and *Madam D.* I should have  
 thought they had never read *Homer* ; for  
 there is nothing this Poet more express-  
 ly every where mentions, than the Glo-  
 ry the Heroes obtained by treating their  
 Enemies in this Manner. “ The same  
 “ *Diomedes*, in B. 5. (p. 200.) attack’d  
 “ *Æneas*, with a Design to strip him of  
 “ his Arms: And again, in B. 11. 186.  
 “ he strips the two Sons of *Merops* of  
 “ of theirs also. *Agamemnon*, B. 11. (p.  
 “ 180.) strips *Iphidamas*, and carries his  
 “ curious and beautiful Arms off in  
 “ Triumph. *Ulysses*, in the same B. (p.  
 “ 193.) says to *Socus*, Your Soul shall  
 “ descend to *Pluto’s* Shades, and I carry  
 “ off your Arms.” In fine, *Achilles*, in  
 B. 22. (273.) strips *Hector* after he had  
 kill’d him. It was not merely a proper  
 and convenient Opportunity that de-  
 termined them to this, but they even  
 made a Rule of it, and it was the gene-  
 ral Practice. *Hector*, in B. 7. (p. 6.) in  
 the

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the Proposition he made of a single Combat, agrees that the Conqueror should have the Arms of the Vanquish'd. *Idomeneus*, in B. 13. (p. 269.) says to *Merion*, " You will find many Launces in  
" in my Tent; you will there see shine  
" those *Trojan* Arms, that I have taken  
" from the Enemies I killed with my  
" own Hand: For I may boast that  
" I was not accustomed to fight at  
" a Distance, but knew how to engage  
" my Adversary closely: This is the  
" Reason my Tent is so enriched with  
" Pikes, Javelins, Bucklers, Head-pieces  
" and Breast-plates, whose Splendour  
" dazzles the Eyes." The Poet himself speaks of this Exploit in the most advantageous Terms, \* " Ye Muses that  
" inhabit the Top of *Olympus*, tell me  
" who was the first of the *Grecians*  
" that adorned his Arm with the bloody  
" Trophies and Spoils of his Enemy."  
In a Word, it was then as glorious to carry off the Arms of their Enemies, as it is now to carry off their Colours and Standards. The Example of *Dio-medes* being wounded, does not therefore destroy this general Observation. What! because *Homer* supposes a Man

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\* B. 14. p. 340.

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wounded in performing a dangerous Action, does the Poet therefore teach it shou'd not be done? What Instruction, and what Kind of Teaching, is this? Indeed, if I were to be consulted on this Occasion, I shou'd never admit any thing as *Homer's*, but what he has deliver'd in the most express Terms, for fear of making him affirm something still worse than what he really does. I know that in some Passages of the *Iliad*, such stripping and plundering of the Dead is indeed forbid: In B. 6. for Example, (p. 242.) *Nestor* raises his Voice, and tells the *Greeks*; "Ye Heroes of the *Greeks*, Favourites of the God of Battles, let none of you amuse or employ himself in the gathering of Spoils to fill his Ships; let us only think of Victory; after that, you will have Time and Leisure enough to strip and plunder the Dead." In B. 15. (p. 336.) *Hector* cries, with all the Power and Force he had, to the *Trojans*, "to abandon Plunder and Pillage, and only attack the Ships." There are undoubtedly Occasions where it may be more advantageous to pursue the Victory, than to carry off the Arms, or Ensigns and Standards of the Vanquish'd; and it appears



*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 345

appears from *Homer's* Text, that it was on such Occasions *Nestor* and *Hector* gave out these Orders : But besides, the carrying off the Arms after the Manner of the ancient Heroes, and the Colours or Standards in ours, is a very different Thing from Pillage, which has spoil'd the Success of the greatest Enterprizes, and even lost all the Fruit and Advantage of compleat Victory, according to the just Remark of *Madam D.* (I. 493.) Lastly, I own that *Homer* has not always clearly enough distinguish'd in this Particular ; *Agamemnon*, for Example, in B. II. (p. 169.) after having kill'd King *Bienor*, together with *Oileus* his Equerry and Master of the Horse, strips them both of their Arms and Cloaths, and leaves them naked ; that is to say, *Homer* makes the General of the *Greeks* perform an Action that was only fit for the meanest Scoundrel in the Army ; or if these were the Manners and Customs of *Homer's* Age, they were savage, and horrid, and little deserve to be preferr'd to ours.

CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

*Of the Discourses.*

**I** Believe it may be needless here to take Notice, that by the *Discourses*, I here understand every thing that *Homer* makes his Persons speak; this is what *Aristotle* terms the *Drama*, and which he mightily praises this Poet for making so great Use of in his Work. If *Homer* was the first who introduc'd and us'd this Manner of Poetical Painting and Representation, as *Aristotle* assures us; adding farther, that he was also the only one that had made Use of it in Epic Poetry; this undoubtedly redounds to the great Honour of this Poet: for besides that this sort of Discourses extremely vary and animate Poetry, they are admirably well adapted to mark and distinguish the peculiar Character of each Person. But if *Homer* first invented this Part, he left it in extreme Imperfection; and the Discourses in the *Iliad* are very faulty in many Particulars, which we shall now examine.

*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 347

mine. We'll first begin with his martial Harangues and Speeches, that concern his Fights, and which were the Subject of the last Chapter, or that have any Affinity or Connexion therewith: The Exhortations naturally offer themselves first. And here, to bring *Homer* as a Witness against his own general Practice, and so serve and conduce to his own Criticism, we'll first produce one of these Exhortations we own indeed to be excellent it self, and for its energick Brevity; but the Comparison and Opposition of which will very much condemn the rest In B. 5. (p. 208.)

*Agamemnon* speaks to his Soldiers in the following Words: " My Friends, shew  
" your selves Men of an intrepid Cou-  
" rage, and let the Respect you owe  
" to your own Dignity and Character,  
" and that of one another, in the pre-  
" sent bloody Strife, engage you uni-  
" versally to do your Duty. In an Ar-  
" my of valiant Men, there are always  
" more saved than perish; whereas  
" Cowards not only acquire no Glory,  
" but even their very Cowardice de-  
" prives them of their accustom'd  
" Strength and Presence of Mind, by  
" which they become a Prey to their  
" Enemies." The Respect which you  
owe



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owe to one another, is one of the finest Things that could be said on this Occasion, and which perfectly justifies and authorises all we have hitherto establish'd, of the Honour and Dignity a Poet ought to maintain in the Characters of each of his Persons : But every where else the Exhortations which *Homer* puts either in the Mouths of his Heroes or Deities, dishonour them to whom they are address'd. In B. 10. (p. 135.) while *Diomedes* was asleep at Midnight, and all the Posts well secur'd and guarded, (*ibid.* 137.) *Nestor* and *Ulysses* are sent by the Orders of *Agamemnon*, to awake all the Leaders and Commanders before the accustom'd Hour. The Poet says, (135.) " That they found *Diomedes* lying in " Armour before his Tent, his Companions upon the Ground round about him, with their Heads leaning upon their Bucklers." The Severity of Military Discipline can't well be carry'd farther ; and accordingly *Madam D.* observes very judiciously on this Occasion, (2. 482.) " That *Homer* always " represents *Diomedes* under the Character of a very great Warrior : *Diomedes* perceiving the Enemies near, " lay in Armour without the Tent."

What

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What do you think all this Detail terminates in? In an Encomium of him by *Nestor* and *Ulysses*? No, but quite contrary: *Nestor* approaches him, pushes him with his Foot, and awakes him; saying to him, "Awake and arise, Son of *Tydeus*; are you not asham'd to sleep so soundly the whole Night?" What is here yet more absurd and ridiculous, is, that *Agamemnon* in the same Book, and four or five Pages higher, giving to *Menelaus* the same Orders to execute for another Quarter of the Army, that he here gives to *Nestor* and *Ulysses*, addresses himself in the following Terms, (p. 129.) "Call each by his Name, treat them all honourably, bestowing on each his just Commendations." Such is the Attention *Homer* gives to the Connexion of his Parts and the Union of his Colours.

I have already treated elsewhere concerning the insulting Exhortations *Glaucus* and *Sarpedon* address to *Hector*. *Sarpedon*, to whom I here confine my self, says to *Hector*, (B. 5. p. 203.) "Son of *Priam*, What is become of that Strength and Courage which you formerly us'd to be Master of? You remain without Action, and don't go from Place to Place to exhort the  
" Troops

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“ Troops to stand firm, for fear of be-  
 “ coming a Prey to your Enemies.  
 “ These are the Cares which ought to  
 “ employ you continually; this is your  
 “ Duty, and you ought to have no  
 “ Rest nor Intermission Night or Day.”  
 Madam D. makes hereupon this Re-  
 mark, (1. 466.) “ The more Courage  
 “ and Bravery a Man has, the more si-  
 “ lent and mute he’ll remain to a Re-  
 “ proach he’s conscious he has de-  
 “ serv’d: *Hector* makes no Answer to  
 “ *Sarpedon*; for he knows he must ju-  
 “ stify himself by Actions, and not by  
 “ Words; and this is what he does. Af-  
 “ terwards, adds *she*, we may remark  
 “ in *Homer*, that all the Reproaches  
 “ which he causes to be made, always  
 “ produce their Effect, as *Eustathius* ve-  
 “ ry well observes; *Hector* reproves  
 “ *Paris*, and *Paris*, who fled, returns to  
 “ the Battle; *Sarpedon* chides *Hector*,  
 “ and *Hector* thereupon does Wonders.  
 “ The Poet teaches us thereby, that  
 “ nothing is so useful as Reproof, pro-  
 “ vided it is given with Judgment and  
 “ Discretion.” But besides, that Exhor-  
 tations from a Subaltern to his Gene-  
 ral, who ought only to admit of Coun-  
 sels, are in themselves absurd, by their  
 subverting all Order and Discipline;  
*Sarpedon*



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*Sarpedon* here breaks in upon the Dignity of *Hector's* Character, by accusing him with want of Courage; a Reproach which a Poet that has any Taste will never suffer to be offer'd to a Person whom he has made a Hero; and if *Sarpedon*, by this Reproach, is not guilty also of a Falshood, it is *Homer's* Fault, who shou'd never have suffer'd *Hector* to commit the least Act of Cowardice.

The Gods, in the *Iliad*, make also Exhortations as much against all the Laws of Decorum as his Heroes do. *Juno* and *Minerva* (B. 5. p. 227.) coming together to a Place where the chief Heat of Action was, they found a considerable Body of the bravest Warriors in the Army assembled round the great *Diomedes*, "like fierce Lions that breathe  
" nothing but Slaughter; or like terrible wild Boars, whose Strength and  
" Fury daunts the most resolute Hunters. There *Juno* stop'd, and assuming the Shape and Voice of *Sentor*——What Shame and Infamy,  
" cries she, ye timorous *Greeks*, who  
" bear only the outward Show and Appearance of Warriors!" Madam *D.* can't pretend here, that *Juno's* Reproach of the *Greeks* is pertinent or just, if  
the

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the Poet's two Comparisons are such. On the contrary, methinks *Juno* shou'd have spoke on this Occasion, as *Patroclus* does in B. 16. where animating the two *Ajaxes* in the Heat of the Engagement, he says to them, (p 36.) "Be-  
" hold an Occasion that requires no-  
" thing less than Men of your Cou-  
" rage; you need only be what you al-  
" ways were, and have been in the most  
" difficult Attempts; or even, if possi-  
" ble, redouble your accustom'd Bra-  
" very and Valour."

*Minerva*, who always improves upon the Absurdities and Follies of the other Deities, acts yet worse than *Juno*; she approaches the Son of *Tydeus*, (B. 5. 228.) whom she finds by his Chariot and Horses. "This Hero had retired a little  
" aside to refresh himself, and look after  
" the Wound *Pindarus* had given him;  
" for under the large and heavy Strap  
" by which his Buckler hung, he was  
" all over in a Sweat, and had no more  
" Strength left him to stand it any long-  
" er, nor to bear his Arms. Lifting  
" then up this Strap, he wash'd his  
" Wound with pure Water, and wip'd  
" off the Blood." The Goddess, leaning  
upon the Harness of his Horses, spoke  
to him in this manner: "In Truth,  
" verily

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" *Tydeus* has a Son who no ways resem-  
" bles him ; *Tydeus*, indeed, was not  
" so tall of Stature, nor so well sha-  
" ped, but then he breathed nothing but  
" War. I remember when the *Grecians*  
" sent him alone as an Ambassador to  
" the *Thebans*, who were very numerous;  
" tho' I expressly forbid his quarrelling  
" with any of them, or insulting them with  
" that Haughtiness of Spirit, which was  
" so natural to him, and also command-  
" ed him to sit at Table with them, and  
" to have no other Conversation but  
" what was friendly and amicable ; yet  
" my express Injunctions were not able  
" to restrain his invincible Courage ;  
" he challenged these proud Descendants  
" of *Cadmus*, and made an easy Con-  
" quest of them ; for I lent him my As-  
" sistance. I do the same for you I did  
" for him : I am always at your Side,  
" to protect and defend you ; and yet  
" when I command you to engage the  
" *Trojans*, I find you either seiz'd with  
" Weariness, or faint with Fear. No,  
" you are not the Son of the brave *Ty-*  
" *deus*, whose Volour I could not re-  
" strain." Madam *D*'s Remarks are no  
less important than the Text : She tells  
us first, (I. 481.) " With what Art does  
" *Homer* here preserve Decorum for  
A a " the



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“ the Conversation that *Minerva* has here  
 “ with *Diomedes*, he chooses the Time  
 “ that this Hero was retir’d from the Bat-  
 “ tle, and weary and faint, and employ’d  
 “ in dressing his Wound upon the Bank  
 “ of the River *Simois*.” I believe there  
 never was any besides *Homer* prais’d for  
 maintaining a due Decorum, by intro-  
 ducing a Deity addressing herself to a  
 wounded Person, not in order to give  
 him any Assistance or Help, but purely  
 to insult or reproach him. Indeed,  
 what can be imagin’d more odious, than  
 to take that very Time when a Soldier  
 bears about him the cruel and bloody,  
 yet fresh bleeding Marks of his Courage  
 and Valour, to say to him that he dege-  
 nerates from his Father? But what is in-  
 deed capable of putting an honest Man  
 out of all Patience, is her casting the  
 most unjust Reflections and Reproaches  
 upon him in a mild Tone: *No*, says she,  
*You are not the Son of the brave Tydeus,*  
*whose Courage and Valour I was not able*  
*to restrain.* Yet all this occasions Ma-  
 dam D. to favour us with the following  
 Instructions: “ I can’t help, says she,  
 “ (481.) saying here a Word, to  
 “ make those who want such Assist-  
 “ ance sensible of the Strength and  
 “ Beauty of this provoking Parallel  
 “ *Minerva*

upon HOMER's Iliad. 355

“ *Minerva* here makes between *Diomedes*  
“ and *Tydeus* his Father ; for I am per-  
“ suaded that such a Remark as this  
“ may be of much greater Use than all  
“ those that can be made relating meerly  
“ to Points of Antiquity. *Tydeus*, all a-  
“ lone in an Enemy's City, fought a-  
“ gainst the *Cadmeans*, notwithstanding  
“ the Prohibitions of *Minerva*, and con-  
“ quer'd them ; and *Diomedes*, at the  
“ Head of his Troops, in the Middle  
“ of a great Army, with Enemies far in-  
“ ferior in Number, refuses to engage,  
“ tho' *Minerva* commands him. *Tydeus*  
“ disobey'd this Goddess by fighting,  
“ and *Diomedes* disobey'd her by not  
“ fighting ; and that after having had  
“ Proofs, upon a thousand Occasions,  
“ of the effectual Help and Assist-  
“ ance of this Goddess. These are  
“ the Turns which *Demosthenes* seems  
“ to have study'd so well, and imitated  
“ so happily on several Occasions : And  
“ indeed *Demosthenes* is the strictest Co-  
“ pier after *Homer*, of all the Orators ;  
“ and I believe we might explain his  
“ Art by that of *Homer*.” I believe  
those Turns of *Homer*, which she ima-  
gines to be imitated by *Demosthenes*, on-  
ly resemble such Figures as Children  
imagine they see in the Clouds ; for

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upon all Occasions *Demosthenes* puts his Thoughts and Reasoning in a clear Light, and has no need of a Commentator to explain them: And, indeed, a Commentator may be necessary to explain such Facts, or Allusion to them, upon which the understanding an Author depends, or to explain these Expressions and Phrases that are not now so clear as they may have been formerly; but it is a Reflection upon any Author whatever, whether Ancient or Modern, that he should want a Commentator to help him how to think or express himself: Besides, *Demosthenes* had Reason for all the Invectives he made to the *Athenians*; without this, the stronger his Eloquence was, it had been only the more false and ridiculous. In a Word, I can see no Affinity between the Harangues of the most Rational and Eloquent of the *Greek* Orators, and this Discourse of *Minerva*, where I can find nothing but an irregular and false Way of Thinking. And I can't help pitying and lamenting poor *Diomedes*, who, tho' he does in the *Iliad* greater Actions than *Achilles* himself, yet is still expos'd as a Butt and Mark to the perpetual Reproaches of Cowardice. Before this of *Minerva*, we have seen that of *Ulysses*; and we may remember, that  
in



upon HOMER's Iliad. 357

in the Chapter which treats of the Character of *Agamemnon*, we have also observed, that this General lessens and undervalues him, when compared with *Tydeus*, by the same History of the *Thebans*; so that if we took out of the *Iliad* all the Actions of *Diomedes*, and left only what is there said of him, he would pass for the greatest Coward in the whole Poem.

There are in the *Iliad* Exhortations of another Sort; which are those that persuade to Flight. We have already seen in this Work many of this sort, delivered both by Gods and Heroes: I will therefore quote no other here but the following one, viz. That of *Sthenelus* and *Diomedes*; *Sthenelus*, Son of *Capaneus*, who had so briskly repulsed (B. 4. p. 157.) the unjust Reproach thrown by *Agamemnon* upon *Diomedes*, on whose Side he stood, seeing in B. 5. (p. 186.) *Pandarus* and *Aeneas* coming towards *Diomedes*, two Adversaries he ought to have despis'd, whether he considered *Diomedes* or himself, was pleas'd to say, " Dear  
" *Diomedes*, I see two valiant Men, full  
" of Courage, marching to engage us;  
" they are both possess'd of great Strength  
" and undaunted Courage; one is *Pan-*  
" *darus*, who has not his Equal for  
" drawing a Bow; the other is *Aeneas*,  
A a 3 who

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“ who boasts himself to be the Son of  
 “ beautiful *Venus* and magnanimous *An-*  
 “ *chises*; let us go then and mount this  
 “ Chariot, and make our Escape.” But  
 whence will it be said proceeds this  
 Contradiction of Character, this absurd  
 Piece of Cowardice in *Sthenelus*? 'Tis  
 only to give an Opportunity for a mar-  
 tial and bold Answer of *Diomedes*, who  
 beholding him (*p.* 187.) with Eyes full  
 of Wrath and Anger, says to him in a  
 fierce and menacing Tone, “ Don't talk  
 “ to me of flying, your Counsel and  
 “ Advice on this Occasion is vain and  
 “ useless.”

After the Exhortations, we shall treat  
 of those Conversations that were held  
 during the Heat of Battle, and those  
 which either precede or suspend the sin-  
 gle Combats. Those Conversations are  
 generally vicious, with Regard to the  
 Time and Place where they are held,  
 without considering or examining what  
 they contain. Sometimes they are Per-  
 sons of the same Side that hold them  
 one with another; such is the Conver-  
 sation between *Aeneas* and *Pandarus*, in  
 B. 5. (*p.* 181.) “ *Aeneas* seeing the Ha-  
 “ vock which the formidable *Diomedes*  
 “ made throughout the Ranks, rushed  
 “ through Pikes and Javelins into the  
 “ Midst

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“Midst of the Battle, to see if he could  
“discover the valiant *Pandarus*, Son of  
“*Lycaon*; whom as soon as he perceiv'd,  
“he joined.” The Poet himself here  
collects with a particular Care all the  
Circumstances of Persons, Times and  
Places that were proper to condemn him:  
It is *Diomedes* whose further Progress he  
ought to put a Stop to, who was now  
actually in his greatest Fury, and attend-  
ed with the greatest Success. *Aeneas* and  
*Pandarus* meet here together in the Heat  
and Confusion of two whole Armies ac-  
tually engaged. It is here *Homer* intro-  
duces a Conversation of five long Pages  
in the *French*, and Seventy Verses in the  
*Greek*. *Aeneas* recounts to *Pandarus* the  
Exploits and Actions of *Diomedes*, and  
desires his Assistance against him with  
his Bow, in which he excels the greatest  
Captains in the *Trojan* Army: This  
takes up one Page. *Pandarus* answers,  
he had already drawn his Bow in vain  
against the Person who resembled *Dio-  
medes*; but who might be some Deity  
or other for ought he knew, or at  
least a Man protected by some Deity,  
since he did not die upon the Spot:  
Besides, his Misfortune at present  
was such, that he had now neither  
Chariot nor Horses by him, tho' he



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had Eleven Chariots in *Lycia* ; of which he gives a Description, and speaks of the Places where they were lodged ; his Father advised him to have taken one with two Horses, but he was afraid lest his Horses, which were always well fed, might suffer in a Town where there was already so great a Number of Cavalry ; that he had contented himself with his Bow and Arrows, which, instead of killing the Enemy, only render'd them the more furious ; but that certainly as soon as he returned home, he would break them in Pieces, and burn them : This takes up three more Pages. In the Fifth, *Æneas* makes an Offer to *Pandarus* of his Chariot, drawn by the excellent Horses of *Tros*, to carry them back to *Troy*, if *Diomedes* got the Advantage. *Pandarus* accepts the Offer ; and while he waits the Approach of *Diomedes* with his Spear or Launce, he desires *Æneas* to hold the Reins of his Horses, who were not to be guided by the Hands of a Stranger, if they should be so unfortunate as to be obliged to fly. This is the Platform of the Conversation between *Æneas* and *Pandarus* ; and what is more, the Model of most of those Discourses *Homer* makes his Heroes hold in the Heat of Action.

We

upon HOMER's Iliad. 361

We find in the 13th Book a Conversation between *Idomeneus* and *Merion*: These two meet (p. 268.) at a little Distance from the Noise and Tumult of the Battle, which they had just left to provide themselves with new Arms: *Idomeneus* in particular (270.) makes a Parenthesis of half a Page, to run into a Declaim of Courage and Valour; after finishing of which, he adds, by an unaccountable Frankness and Sincerity on the Part of the Poet, (p. 271.) "But let us not here talk any more of our great Actions and Exploirs, like young Coxcombs, lest any Body shou'd overhear and make a Jest of us, for losing Time in Talk, when we ought to act" Madam D. her self gives up this Conversation, (2. 554, 555.) and thinks that this was one of those Passages where, to use *Horace's* Phrase, *Homer* sometimes nods: 'Tis indeed the only one she condemns throughout the whole *Iliad*, supposing it genuine: But it is not so much the Nature or Greatness of the Fault therein lamented, as the Confession of the Poet himself that determin'd her thereto; for if she had impartially consulted the Nature of Things themselves, she must have been sensible that this Conversation between  
Ido.

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*Idomeneus* and *Merion* is much less faulty than that between *Aeneas* and *Pandarus*, both because it is in it self less childish and trifling, and not a third Part so long; as also because being held apart, it is not attended with the Incongruity and Absurdity of a formal Conversation, at a Time, and in a Place, where 'twas scarce possible for the strongest Lungs to talk, so as to be heard or understood; for, according to *Eustathius*, whom she cites (2. 393.) a human Voice was'n't sufficient to be heard in the Noise and Tumult of Battle.

But the Conversations between the Enemies are what surpass and excel all the rest in Ridicule; I mean the Insults, Reproaches and Railleries that the two opposite Sides bestow upon one another. The first, and at the same Time one of the most singular Examples of this absurd and ridiculous kind of Conversation, is that of *Diomedes* and *Glaucus* in B. 6. as has been already observ'd and criticis'd before me,\* who instead of taking the Advantage of the Imprudence of *Hector*, in going to *Troy* in the Heat of Battle,

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\* *Monsieur de la Mothe.*



upon HOMER's Iliad. 363

commit another, in suffering themselves to be amus'd a considerable Time, in hearing and relating long Stories. *Diomedes* first asks *Glaucus*, Who he is? (p. 246.) inserting in the Question the History of *Bacchus*. *Glaucus* answers *Diomedes* (247.) "Magnanimous Son of  
" *Tydeus*, why do you ask me, who I  
" am? As Leaves are upon the Forrests,  
" so are Men upon the Face of the  
" Earth: The Leaves which are to Day  
" the Ornaments of the Trees there,  
" are blown down by the Winds; and  
" the Woods and Forrests, when they  
" sprout and flourish, produce new  
" Ones; when, at the same Time, all  
" Nature is animated again by the  
" Spring-Season: It is the same with  
" Men, one Generation passes, and a-  
" nother comes and flourishes." What  
do you say of this Common-Place,  
which seems to have no Relation with  
*Diomedes*' Question? But this is nothing  
in Comparison to the History of *Bellerophon*, which *Glaucus* here relates, only  
because he is the Grandson of that Heroe. This History fills five whole Pages  
in the *French* Translation, which, tho'  
so very long and tedious, yet *Glaucus*  
therein omits a Circumstance, for want  
of which we know nothing of *Bellerophon's*

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*phon's* Character, who in *p.* 248, is propos'd as a most pious and wise Person, and who in *p.* 251. has drawn down upon himself the Hatred and Displeasure of the Gods, one can't tell how. So that Madam *D.* is here oblig'd to have Recourse to one of her strain'd and far-fetch'd Moralities: This Poet, *says she*, (*l.* 501.) wou'd hereby give us to understand that it was more easy for this Prince to preserve his Innocence, while he was in Trouble and Adversity, than while he was happy and prosperous, and seated upon a Throne. At the End of this History, *Diomedes* owns he had with *Glaucus* some Relations, or mutual Obligations of Hospitality, by his Ancestors: He relates the Presents they us'd to make; and, to imitate them, seeing *Glaucus* had golden Arms, he makes a Proposal to exchange them with his, which were only made of Brass, and, according to the Poet, were of ten Times less Value. *Glaucus*, whom *Jupiter*, according to the obvious and natural Sense of the Text, deprives of Understanding, immediately accepts this impertinent Offer and Proposal of *Diomedes*, who thereby gains almost as much as if he had kill'd his Man, and stripp'd him. But we shall speak elsewhere

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where of the Force and Meaning of the Greek Word ἐξέλετο, which occasions some Difficulty in this Place.

We'll here add to the Conversation of *Diomedes* and *Glaucus*, that of *Aeneas* and *Achilles*, which almost equal it in Length, but far surpasses it in the Incongruity and Absurdity of the Discourse. *Achilles* (B. 20. p. 187.) first asks *Aeneas*, with what Design he advanced to attack him? And then entering into the Secrets of the State of Succession of *Priam*, says, "Have you any  
" Hopes that King *Priam* will chuse  
" you for a Successor, and that after  
" him you will reign in *Troy*? But  
" tho' you should even distinguish and  
" signalize your self by my Over-  
" throw, and go off victorious in this  
" Conflict, yet *Priam* will never reward  
" that Service at so high a Rate; for  
" he has Children of his own, and his  
" Understanding is not so weak, as  
" to entertain Thoughts so injurious  
" to his Family. Or have the *Tro-*  
" *jans* promis'd you a certain Compass  
" of Ground, and are they to make you  
" a Present of it, as to a Hero, after you  
" have conquer'd me? But I hope you  
" won't so easily succeed in this Enter-  
" prize." Thereupon he makes him  
remember



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remember how one Day he had formerly attack'd his Troops upon Mount *Ida*, and that he had thereupon put him to Flight; and that pursuing him as far as *Lyrnessa*, he had sack'd that City, by the Assistance of *Minerva*, and had kill'd him himself, if he had not been sav'd by *Jupiter*. We must know, that by *Homer's* small Skill, in composing and framing his Stories and Narrations, and the little regard he shows in rightly and artfully managing the Patience of his Readers, this Adventure upon Mount *Ida* had been related six Pages before (p. 182.) by *Æneas* himself, in the same Number of Verses in the *Greek*, and in three Lines more in the *French*; yet *Madam D.* makes this Remark upon Occasion of this Repetition, (3. 515.) "*Achilles* enlarges here a little further upon the History which *Æneas* had just mention'd. "*Homer* so artfully contrives these Relations, as never to be guilty of any Repetitions." *Æneas* here answers *Achilles*, that if he had a Mind he cou'd reproach and abuse him as outrageously as another. *Achilles* had not utter'd any, and had even here spoke too mild for his Character. *Æneas* continues and treats, not without Reason, as trifling and childish, all whatever *Achilles* had

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had said ; but he also gives the same Name to the Account of his own Genealogy, which he himself had begun and was going to continue : He carries it so high as *Jupiter*, Father of *Dardanus* ; he mentions the Mares and Colts belonging to this Hero ; he relates the Fable of *Boreus*, who was in Love with those Mares, and had by them Twelve young ones, whose Properties and Excellencies he explains ; and he afterwards draws up a long Genealogy ; and not to exaggerate, 'tis compos'd of Sixteen proper Names, some of which are even twice repeated from *Jupiter* down to *Aeneas*, who is the last. After which he returns to the Article of Injuries, which we might have hop'd was already over ; and he treats it, if not with a Meanness and Baseness of Expression and Terms, which we are not allow'd to accuse *Homer* of ; yet Language, at least with a Baseness of Sense that nothing e'er equall'd : “ Let us lose no more  
“ Time, says he, (191.) in vain Discourse in the midst of two Armies ;  
“ we need never want Injuries or Reproaches when we please ; there are  
“ so many, that if they were written  
“ down, a Vessel with an hundred Oars  
“ would scarce be able to bear them ;  
“ for

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“ for nothing is so voluble as the  
 “ Tongue, it finds always wherewith  
 “ to exercise itself. There is on both  
 “ Sides a vast Scope for Discourses, where  
 “ Arms need ne’er be wanting, and we  
 “ may always return Injury for Injury.  
 “ Let us not behave ourselves like  
 “ Women, who scold and quarrel in  
 “ Streets and publick Places, and re-  
 “ proach one another with all they  
 “ know, and also all they don’t know,  
 “ for Anger governs them.” Here’s a  
 decisive Acknowledgment, and *Homer’s*  
 Self-Condernation proceeds from his  
 own Mouth: He owns, without think-  
 ing, that when in the first Book he  
 made *Achilles* throw Reproaches upon  
*Agamemnon* that had no Foundation, he  
 made him imitate the Women that quar-  
 rel in the Streets and publick Places,  
 and reproach one another with whatever  
 comes into their Thoughts, whether  
 true and false; and that therefore he  
 has treated the Anger of his Hero only  
 like that of a Scold, or one of the La-  
 dies at *Billingsgate*. We see here he was  
 conscious and sensible, not only of the  
 Usefulness and Incoherence of his Dis-  
 course; but also what surprizes me  
 more, even their trifling Pucility and  
 Meanness, which was more the Fault of  
 the



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the Age he liv'd in, and consequently was in itself more imperceptible, and not so easy to be discover'd by him: He has done the same Thing with Respect to Nature and Decorum, that he has done with Regard to the first natural and original Ideas of Divinity and Morality; he knew both, but had not the Courage to follow either: This is one of the strongest Arguments that can be brought, not only against his Work, but even against his Judgment and Understanding. But let us hear Madam D. upon this Conversation of *Achilles* and *Aeneas*, who speaks thus, (3. 518.) "*Eustathius* says upon this Occasion, that *Homer* often de-  
lights in surprising his Reader, and presenting him with something very different from what he expected: He expected here to see a furious Duel terminate in the Death of one of the Heroes, and he sees those Heroes retire without any Wound, after a very calm Conversation, succeeded with a slight Engagement." But methinks a Poet shou'd surprize only by the Wonderful, and not by the Absurd; "but *Homer*, continues *Eustathius*, as cited by Madam D. makes us a large Amends for what he might seem to make us lose:

B b

"and

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“ and the Admirers of this Poet find  
 “ here, besides many poetical Descrip-  
 “ tions and Beauties, a great Number  
 “ of ancient Histories, with which the  
 “ Conversation of those Heroes a-  
 “ bounds.” In a Passage in the same  
 B. 20. (p. 185.) and that immediately  
 precedes this Conversation of *Achilles*  
 and *Æneas*, *Neptune* and the other Dei-  
 ties, Friends to the *Grecians*, go to sit  
 down in a Place call'd the Entrenchment  
 of *Hercules*. Madam D. thereupon (3.  
 514.) informs us of “ the Original of  
 “ this Entrenchment, and the Reason  
 “ of its Name; and she adds, that Ho-  
 “ mer doesn't yield to the Temptation of  
 “ relating this History; for, says she, the  
 “ State of Affairs wou'dn't then allow  
 “ him the Time.” It may be said in  
 general, that the Curiosity of a Reader  
 shou'd never be rais'd concerning Things,  
 which there is not sufficient Time to  
 explain: But indeed, if one has Re-  
 course to the Text, (p. 185.) we shall  
 not only find that the Battle was not  
 yet begun by the Gods, but that the  
 Deities were still in Consultation even  
 in the following Page 186. whether  
 they should begin it or not; and  
 this Consultation was not determined  
 but by *Jupiter's* Order. Thus the Poet,  
 who

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who is not himself in the Field of Battle, but composing in his Chamber, thinks that the Posture and Situation of a Battle that was not yet resolv'd upon, don't permit him to relate the History of the Entrenchment above-mention'd; yet when the Battle is actually begun, *Achilles* and *Aeneas*, who were the principal Actors therein, can yet find Time to hold one of the longest, most trifling and foolish Conversations in the whole *Iliad*.

After this, I can't but admire the particular Care Madam D. sometimes takes to convince us, that *Homer* never introduces his Discourses, but at seasonable and proper Occasions. In B. 5. (p. 207.)

" The Soldiers of *Aeneas* are transport-  
" ed with Joy to see him suddenly  
" cur'd of a Wound he had just receiv'd;  
" but, *says the Poet*, they did not inter-  
" rogate him upon this odd and sur-  
" prising Event, as they wou'd have  
" wish'd and desir'd; for the Bat-  
" tle that *Apollo*, insatiable *Mars*, and  
" implacable *Discord*, had excited,  
" didn't allow 'em Time." This sin-  
" gle Passage might suffice, says Madam  
D. (1. 468.) hereupon, " to shew that  
" when *Homer* makes his Heroes con-  
" tinue long in Discourse, it is when



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“ the Occasion is not very urgent, but  
 “ allows them Time ; for whenever the  
 “ Action is hot, he knows very well  
 “ how to retrench all unseasonable  
 “ and superfluous Discourses.” What  
 a Reflection is this ! that what *Homer*  
 does in one Place, is sufficient to shew  
 what he does every where else ; when  
 yet we find every where else, that he  
 absurdly violates his own Rule : But  
*Eustathius* praises him yet more absurd-  
 ly for having violated it. In B. 21. (p.  
 220.) *Achilles* in the Heat of his Pas-  
 sion comes from killing *Asteropæus*, and  
 he is going to kill *Terfiochus*, *Mydon*,  
*Astypylus*, &c. At that Instant he in-  
 troduces a Discourse of a whole Page,  
 where he inserts this Passage, address’d  
 to the Body of *Asteropæus*. “ You boast  
 “ of being descended from the River  
 “ *Axius*, and I boast of deriving my  
 “ Pedigree from *Jupiter* himself ; for  
 “ *Peleus*, who reigns over all the *Thessa-*  
 “ *lians*, was my Father, and he is the  
 “ Son of *Eacus*, who was the Offspring  
 “ of *Jupiter*.” “ We ought particularly  
 “ to remark, says *Madam D.* hereupon  
 citing *Eustathius* (3. 532.) “ with what  
 “ Art *Homer* intermingles the Simplicity  
 “ of Genealogical Relations, during the  
 “ greatest Heat of Action, thereby the bet-  
 “ ter

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“ter to vary his Poetry, and divert his  
“Reader.” Here is a very urgent and  
pressing Occasion, where yet we find *Ho-*  
*mer* commended by Madam D. for intro-  
ducing a Genealogy to entertain his Rea-  
der. It is just so in the Enumeration in  
B. 2. at the Beginning of which Madam D.  
observes, (1. 359.) “That to supply  
“Action, which is the Soul of Poetry,  
“and to prevent and take off from the  
“Tedioufness and Satiety, which the  
“great Number of proper Names, of  
“which this Enumeration principally  
“consists, might give; that the Poet  
“therefore has admirably vary'd it,  
“by the Recital of ancient Facts.” Yet  
in the Midst of this same Enumeration,  
(p. 80.) upon Occasion of the Children  
of *Oeneus* King of *Calydon*, Madam D.  
says, (p. 368) “That *Homer* wasn't  
“tempted to relate their History,  
“which yet was highly tragick and  
“pathetick, because this was not a  
“proper Place.” Yet if he had insert-  
ed it, her Encomiums and Praises were  
ready at Hand; and then we should  
have been told, that it was to supply  
the Place of Action, and to prevent its  
becoming tedious. Madam D. with Re-  
ference to *Homer*, is every where in a  
Dilemma of Admiration, *quidquid dexe-*

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*ris admirabor*; whatever Side he happens to chuse or adhere to, he is always sure of her Encomiums.

Besides these trifling Conversations between Enemies, there are also those that consist only in Reproaches; and if the Heroes of the same Side observe no Decorum among themselves, we may easily judge that those of a different and opposite Side observe it yet much less in the Heat of Battle. I here confine myself to the Reproaches which *Tlepolemus*, Son of *Hercules* throws upon *Sarpedon*, Son of *Jupiter*, before he attacks him. *Homer* seems so intent throughout his Poem to raise the Character of *Sarpedon*, who, without regarding his Birth, seems the most Illustrious of all the Captains who were in Alliance with the *Trojans*, that he attributes to him the greatest Share in the Attack of the Entrenchments in the Twelfth Book; the killing of him, which happens in the 16th Book, is the greatest of all *Patroclus's* Exploits, and *Jupiter* takes particular Care of his Body. This Hero enters upon Action in the Fifth Book; and according to *Homer's* usual Manner and good Custom, the first Idea the Reader receives by the Mouth of *Tlepolemus*, is as follows (B. 5. p. 216.) “ You Sarpedon,



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“ *pedon*, who command the *Lycians*,  
“ what Necessity was there for your  
“ coming here to expose your want of  
“ Courage, and show that you were  
“ never made for War? Those who call  
“ you the Son of great *Jupiter*, flatter  
“ you, and impose upon us; there is  
“ too sensible a Difference between you  
“ and those great Persons who are the  
“ genuine Off-spring of this Deity; of  
“ which Number my Father certainly  
“ was, who was indefatigable in La-  
“ bour, invincible in Battle, and of an  
“ approv'd and undaunted Courage. He  
“ formerly came into this Country for  
“ *Laomedon's* Horses; he came only  
“ with Six Vessels and a few Troops;  
“ yet with them he effectually laid waste  
“ and desolate the City of *Ilium*, and  
“ render'd the Country all round those  
“ Places a frightful and solitary Desart.  
“ As for you, you are only a Coward,  
“ and suffer your Troops to perish  
“ here miserably. I don't think your  
“ Voyage from *Lycia* to *Troy* will be  
“ of any Advantage to the *Trojans*;  
“ No, tho' we should even allow you  
“ for a Prodigy of Valour; for struck  
“ down with my Launce, you will soon  
“ go down into *Pluto's* dark Regions.  
Whereas other Poets generally endea-  
your

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vour to sustain the Fabulous or Marvel-  
 lous they introduce in their Poems; *Homer*  
 here, on the contrary, renders doubtful  
 the Birth and Origin of *Sarpedon*, which  
 he himself had before so much magnified:  
 Besides, if *Sarpedon* is not the Son of *Ju-*  
*piter*, must he therefore be a Coward, as  
*Tlepolemus* reproaches him? And lastly,  
 What Honour can redound to *Tlepolemus*  
 in killing a Coward? And indeed, he is  
 very justly punished for his Folly; for,  
 'tis he himself who is killed by *Sarpedon*,  
 with a Wound he receiv'd in the middle  
 of his Neck. (p. 218.) But before he  
 attacks him, *Sarpedon* made him the  
 following Answer, (p. 217.) " 'Tis true,  
 " *Tlepolemus*, that *Hercules* formerly  
 " ruin'd and destroy'd the City of *Troy*  
 " through the Fault and Imprudence of  
 " the great *Laomedon*, who refus'd him  
 " his Horses he had promised him, and  
 " for which this Hero had come very  
 " far: Nor was this perjur'd Prince fa-  
 " tisfy'd with refusing of them; but al-  
 " so treated him unworthily, notwith-  
 " standing the great Services he had  
 " done him. As for you, I prophecy  
 " you'll never inherit your Father's Lot  
 " and Portion; for now your last Mo-  
 " ment attends you here, and struck  
 " down with this Launce you'll cover me  
 " with

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“ with Glory, and enrich with one  
“ Shade more the Regions of Infernal  
“ *Pluto*.” Madam D. says thereupon,  
(i. 473.) “ *Sarpedon* could not de-  
“ ny that *Hercules* took *Troy* ; but he  
“ endeavours to diminish the Great-  
“ ness and Glory of this Exploit, by  
“ saying that it was more owing to  
“ the Injustice of *Laomedon* than to  
“ the Valour of *Hercules*”. But what  
then becomes of the *Trojans* ? adds Ma-  
dam D. “ Will not the Injustice of  
“ *Priam*, and his Princes and Sons prove  
“ also yet more fatal to them ? *Sarpedon*  
“ was sensible of this Consequence,  
“ wherefore he don't any longer insist  
“ upon it, but proceeds immediately to  
“ threaten, *Thy last Hour expects thee*  
“ *here, &c.*” Thus we must dive and  
search very deep to discover *Homer's*  
Beauties ; but yet I must say for the  
Sake of the Readers who can have the  
Patience particularly to examine this  
whole Matter, that a Poet having the  
Choice of the Discourses he makes his  
Persons speak, isn't therefore justified,  
because he can make them elude or e-  
vade the Replies or Retortions to which  
he exposes them ; but shou'd have made  
them talk in a very different and better  
manner. *Sarpedon*, for Example, shou'd  
parti-



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particularly have insisted upon his Birth, which was here contested, and of which *Homer* shou'd have therefore render'd him more especially tender and jealous, if he had paid the least Regard to Nature ; and, on the contrary, shou'd have render'd him very indifferent as to the Fact of *Laomedon*, which did not in the least concern, or was wholly insignificant to him ; and thereby he would have preserv'd his Discourse from the Vice and Fault of Incoherence, that ἀνακόλουθον of the *Greeks*, of which the Persons in the *Iliad* are always guilty.

But what is most horrid and shocking of all, in *Homer's* Discourses, both with respect to good Sense and good Manners, are the Railleries and Reproaches address'd to the Wounded, and often to the Dead themselves. There are some of those that are trifling or childish ; or in which, to express it more properly, *Homer* gives a trifling childish Turn to Things in themselves the most grave and important ; such is the Insult and Abuse of *Ulysses* to *Socus*, in the Eleventh Book :  
 “ You Son of valiant *Hippasus*, says  
 “ *Ulysses* to him, (p. 194.) you hoped  
 “ to make your Escape by Flight, but  
 “ thou art a bad Runner, and Death  
 “ has been quicker and more diligent :

“ It

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“ It has soon overtaken thee, O unfortunate Man, and your Parents won't now have the Consolation to shut your Eyes ; but Birds of Prey will devour you, and fight about your Carcass : Whereas, when I am dead, all the *Greeks* will assist at my Funeral, and honour me with a magnificent Tomb and Monument.” Such also is that poor Piece of Wit of *Polydamas*, who says of a Spear or Launce he had thrown at a *Grecian*, “ That it would serve him for a Staff to descend with to the Infernal Regions.” (B. 14. p. 338.) We may see the Encomium Madam D. gives these Passages in her Remarks, (2. 592.)

There are other Reproaches which are yet more provoking. We have elsewhere spoke of *Othryoneus*, who came to *Troy* to demand *Cassandra* in Marriage ; and who, that he might the better deserve her, expos'd himself to all kind of Perils and Dangers, which at first presents us with a noble Idea. He is kill'd in the Thirteenth Book by *Idomeneus* ; and *Homer*, who seldom misses spoiling his most beautiful Passages with some disagreeable Stroaks, which I believe I have also observed elsewhere, makes this unfortunate Lover to be cruelly insulted by

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by his Adversary, in the following manner; who seeing him fall, says to him, (p 277.) “ *Othryoneus*, you’d be the  
 “ bravest of Men, if you had kept the  
 “ Promise you made to *Priam*. This  
 “ good King, the more effectually to  
 “ engage you to the Performance, promis’d you his Daughter; but we are  
 “ now in a better Condition to please  
 “ and satisfy you than King *Priam*. We  
 “ are going to send to *Argos* for the  
 “ most beautiful of all *Agamemnon’s*  
 “ Daughters, and we’ll give her you in  
 “ Marriage, on Condition that your  
 “ rare and extraordinary Courage and  
 “ Valour renders us Masters of *Troy*.  
 “ Come then on board our Vessels, that  
 “ we may draw up Articles; for we  
 “ are not unworthy to have such a Son-  
 “ in-Law.” Was there ever so insipid,  
 cruel and so unreasonable a Piece of Rail-  
 lery! What cou’d provoke *Idomeneus*,  
 who was neither Rival, nor had any  
 particular Quarrel with *Othryoneus*, to  
 add to that Mortal Wound he had al-  
 ready given this young Prince, by an  
 Irony which causes yet sharper Wounds?  
 True Heroes never rejoice in Victory;  
 but in some sort lament and regret, at  
 the same time for the Blood of their En-  
 mies, by which it is purchased; for  
 indeed



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indeed, true Valour and Bravery is always accompanied with the greatest Humanity, and never makes the Death of Men the Matter of its Mirth and Railery, whom it never sacrifices but by Necessity and Constraint. Madam D. herself owns this Principle ; and upon a Passage in the Third Book, she says, (p. 388.) “ That *Menelaus* is not only  
“ touched with Compassion at the Sufferings and Hardships of the *Greeks*,  
“ but also at those of the *Trojans*. This,  
“ adds she, is the Character of a just  
“ and good Prince : He knows how to  
“ distinguish among his Enemies the  
“ Innocent from the Guilty.” But without rising to such great and noble Sentiments, there is no Soldier of any Birth or Sense, who won't speak with Esteem of those, even among his Enemies, who died bravely in the Field ; so far will he be from jesting at their dying Agonies, Yet the Judgment Madam D. passes upon this Speech of *Othryoneus* is, (2. 560.) “ *Homer*, says she, introduces here  
“ with a great deal of Art, Jests and  
“ Raileries that proceed from an heroick  
“ Courage ; and which, at the same time,  
“ are very capable of exciting the Courage of the Soldiers that heard them,  
“ and of diverting the calm Reader.”

And

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And thereupon 'tis she tells us after *Eustathius*, (2. 559.) that *Homer* is also the Father of Comedy: Yet notwithstanding all the Pleasure and Satisfaction Madam *D.* takes in such sort of Raillery, *Homer* himself condemns it. *Merion* in B. 16. had only said a few Words to *Aeneas*, as he was about to attack him, (p. 39.) "*Aeneas*, says he, " how brave soever you are, you'll find " it hard to defeat so many Enemies " as now come to assault you. Tho' " you are the Son of a Goddess, you " are no more immortal than I; you " need only therefore put on a fair " Show; this Launce of mine will " prove happier than thine, and *Pluto* " and I will make a fair Division; " he'll have thy Soul, and I the " Glory of dislodging it, and sending it down into his Dominions. "*Patroclus*, who overheard him, cou'd " not refrain from sharply rebuking " him: What! *Merion*, says he, can a " Man of Courage amuse himself here " with empty Talk and Discourse? It " is not by Jestings and Raillery we " shall ever repulse the *Trojans*, and " oblige 'em to quit the Body of *Sarpedon*, but by making the greatest " and bravest of their Commanders and " Leaders

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“ Leaders to eat up the Dust : Councils  
“ require Words, but War Action ; this  
“ isn't a Place for Talking, but Action.”  
It is then in vain that Mr. D. says in  
his Remarks upon *Aristotle's Poetry* (p.  
440.) that it is natural for Men of se-  
vere Spirits to talk together in cold  
Blood before they engage : *Patroclus* in  
*Homer* has turn'd this natural sort of  
Conversation into Ridicule. But what  
most of all confounds me, with Refer-  
ence to the Admirers of this Poet, is,  
that this same *Patroclus*, who had just  
given his Companion so wise an Instruc-  
tion and Advice, shortly after kill'd  
*Cebrion*, who (p. 16. 47.) falls headlong  
from his Chariot, like a Diver ; where-  
upon *Patroclus* cries aloud, with a ma-  
licious Laughter : “ Good Gods ! how  
“ nimble that *Trojan* is, and in how  
“ graceful a Manner he dives down  
“ headlong ! 'Tis Pity he isn't nearer  
“ the Sea : Who wou'd ever thought  
“ there were such good Divers in  
“ *Troy* ? ” This is sufficiently bad and  
ridiculous ; yet this Piece of Raillery  
has been very much abridg'd in the  
Translation. But Madam D. gives  
it us entire in her Remarks, (3.  
429.) as follows : “ 'Tis Pity he  
“ is no nearer the Sea, he would  
“ furnish



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“ furnish good Tables with excellent  
 “ Oysters, and Storms and Tempests  
 “ cou’dn’t in the least terrify or affright  
 “ him. See how, to keep himself in  
 “ Breath, he exercises himself, and  
 “ dives headlong from the Top of his  
 “ Chariot to the Ground : Who would  
 “ ever have thought there were such  
 “ good Divers at *Troy* ? This appears  
 “ to me a little too tedious, *says Madam*  
 “ *D. hereupon* and if this Passage is  
 “ really genuine, I should almost say  
 “ that this Poet intended hereby to  
 “ shew us, that a great Soldier may be  
 “ a very poor Jester : But I very much  
 “ doubt this ; for ’tis highly probable  
 “ that these five last Verses have been  
 “ added by some of the ancient Cri-  
 “ ticks, whose Caprices and Corrections  
 “ *Homer* underwent ; or perhaps by  
 “ some of the Rhapsodists, who, in reci-  
 “ ting these Verses, made thereunto Ad-  
 “ ditions according to their own Whim  
 “ and Fancy, to please their Auditors.  
 “ And what perswades me the more of  
 “ the Truth of this, is, that ’tis no  
 “ ways probable that *Patroclus*, who  
 “ had just reprov’d *Merion* for rallying  
 “ *Æneas*, (*p. 40.*) and had said, that  
 “ it was not by Railing and Invectives  
 “ that they must repulse the *Trojans*,  
 “ but

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“ but by attacking Sword in Hand, and  
“ that Consulting requir'd Words, and War  
“ Actions; that he should so soon forget  
“ his own excellent Advice and Admo-  
“ nition, and be guilty of Raillery him-  
“ self, upon a like Occasion, especially  
“ in the Presence of of *Hector*.” What-  
ever Madam D. may here say, this is  
not a sufficient Reason for rejecting  
those Verses in *Homer*; his Poem pre-  
sents us with so many other Persons, Men  
of Character, who blame in others what  
they are guilty of themselves. *Achilles*,  
for Example, who is so lavish of his In-  
juries and Reproaches upon all Occasi-  
ons, and who shou'd not have forgot  
those he had bestow'd upon *Agamemnon*,  
seeing *Ajax* and *Idomeneus* quarrelling in  
the 23d Book, as they were beholding  
the Games, says to them, without any  
Shame or Remorse, (p. 318.) “ *Ajax* and  
“ you *Idomeneus*, leave off a Dispute so  
“ unbecoming Men of your Character;  
“ if you had seen the least Officers of the  
“ Army do as much, you wou'd have  
“ commanded them Silence.” I am not at  
all therefore surpriz'd to find *Patroclus* con-  
demning Jestling and Rallying in *Merion*,  
yet guilty of it in a worse and more ridicu-  
lous Manner himself; but I am very much  
surpriz'd to find Madam D. by this her

C c

Remark,

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Remark, give just Liberty to every Reader to cut off from the *Iliad* whatever appears censurable. If hereupon we were to refer it to the Judgment of certain Persons, this might reduce *Homer's* two Volumes into a very narrow Compass.

But it is Time to proceed to such Discourses as are made upon other Occasions than that of Combats. We have already in the Course of this Work consider'd several, which we shan't therefore here again repeat; but proceed to what remains, observing the Order of the *Iliad* itself. In the first B. (p. 17, 18.) *Nestor* undertakes to heal a Breach between *Achilles* and *Agamemnon*; and in his Discourse, which it is needless to relate at length, *Homer* begins with giving him the Character of an old Story-Teller, who is never weary with repeating the Adventures of his Youth, and who, like all the other Admirers of Antiquity, is fully perswaded, that the Time past afforded greater Men than the present. This 'twill be said indeed, is the general Character of old Men, and *Homer* therefore deserves to be admir'd for having so truly represented it. I own, that by some such Passages, *Homer* hath shew'd that he discover'd the Intent of Characters,



*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 387

acters, and the Use that might be made of 'em in Poetry ; but he was far from making all the just and proper Reflections upon so important a Subject ; he errs here in not rightly distinguishing all the Strokes with which an old Man may be describ'd, and which were those that best suited an Epic Poem. Father *Bossu*, at the End of the 8th Chapter, and throughout all the 9th of his 4th Book, teaches, that in the Circumstances of a Character which are in a Poet's Choice, he ought to take those which are the most proper to render the Person agreeable. To shew that I receive with Pleasure Instructions from Father *Bossu*, and that I only intend to lead his Readers and mine into the Knowledge and Discovery of Truth, I apply his Rule to the Character of an old Man taken in general, and say ; An old Man, consider'd as such, and preserving what is essential to this Idea, may be either a Story-Teller, and proud Boaster of his own Exploits, a blind and foolish Admirer of Antiquity ; or he may be a Man of profound Sense, Experience and Moderation. *Homer* then ought to have describ'd *Nestor* with those good Qualities, without mixing them with the bad Ones. But if he

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had Occasion, with Relation to his Subject, to attribute some Fault to *Nestor*, which yet don't appear, he ought to have chose, among the Failings of old Men, those which don't make them appear ridiculous; such as too great Circumspection, or Condescension; and ought to have avoided that of an old Story-Teller. We may even go farther, and say, that a Poet may be allow'd to ascribe certain Faults to his Heroes, which in themselves tend to Ridicule; but the Dignity of an Epic Poem, tho' it may allow him the mentioning of such Faults, won't allow him to imitate 'em: We may be told that *Nestor* loved to talk; but I should be tired and cloy'd with the Repetition of his Discourses. Nothing can set this Principle in a truer and better Light, and shew at the same time the right Manner how to treat the Faults of Heroes, than the following Passage in *Telemachus*. “ *Adrastus*, who spar'd no  
 “ Expence for Intelligence, had been  
 “ advis'd of his Enemies Resolution; for  
 “ *Nestor* and *Philoctetes*, tho' otherwise  
 “ sage and experienc'd Captains, had not  
 “ been secret in their Counsels. *Nestor*,  
 “ being now in the Decline of his Age,  
 “ took too much Delight in recounting  
 “ his former Actions, thro' a fond De-  
 “ fire

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“ fire of Praise. *Philoctetes* was by Na-  
“ ture less talkative, but he was pas-  
“ sionate ; and upon the least Pro-  
“ vocation, he wou'd blab out all his  
“ Designs. Cunning People by this  
“ Means had found the Key to his  
“ Heart, whereby to come at all his  
“ most important Secrets : They need-  
“ ed but to set him in a Flame, then  
“ he wou'd break out into threatening  
“ Language, boasting of infallible Means  
“ to compass his Designs. If they  
“ seem'd in the least to doubt of those  
“ Means, he wou'd presently, and  
“ without Consideration, fall to ex-  
“ plaining them ; and thus the nearest  
“ and most intimate Secret made its E-  
“ scape from his Heart, which was  
“ like a costly Vessel, but being crack'd,  
“ lets go the most delicious Liquors.  
“ The Traitors that were corrupted  
“ by *Adrastus's* Gold, did not fail to  
“ take Advantage of the Weakness  
“ of these two Princes ; they wou'd  
“ be incessantly flattering *Nestor* with  
“ vain Applause ; they repeated to him  
“ his past Victories, admir'd his Fore-  
“ sight, and prais'd his Conduct be-  
“ yond Measure. On the other hand,  
“ they laid continual Snares for the im-  
“ patient Humour of *Philoctetes* ; they



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“ talk’d of nothing to him but Difficul-  
 “ ties, Disappointments, Dangers, In-  
 “ conveniencies and irretrievable Over-  
 “ sights: When his warm Disposition  
 “ was once inflam’d, his Wisdom de-  
 “ serted him, and he was quite another  
 “ sort of Man.” But there is no need  
 either of Reasoning or Precedent, to show  
 how ridiculous *Nestor* makes himself by  
 his frequent Relations of his former Cou-  
 rage and Bravery, since *Madam D* tells us  
 herself, (1. 311. after the honest *Archbishop*  
 of *Theſſalonica*,) that it wasn’t indeed  
 ridiculous for Women to boast of their  
 good or great Actions, because they do  
 so seldom occur; but it was extreme  
 ridiculous in a Man, to whom good  
 Actions ought to be familiar and habi-  
 tual.

In the second B. the whole Army, which  
 was preparing to depart upon the counter-  
 feit Order of *Agamemnon*, had given way  
 to the Exhortations of *Ulyſſes*, and resolv’d  
 to stay. “ *Thersites* alone, (p. 55.)  
 “ speaking without Measure or Bounds,  
 “ made a horrid Noise, all his Discourse  
 “ consisting of nothing but Injuries and  
 “ Reproaches, and in all Manner of  
 “ Rudeness; he was always insolently  
 “ attacking the Character and Dignity  
 “ of Kings and Princes, and said every  
 “ Thing

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“ Thing that came into his Head.” In the *Episode* of *Thersites*, which is only a long tedious Discourse, like all the others, the Poet, according to Madam D. (r. 344.) “ instructs his Reader, by “ presenting him with the Character of “ a Man, who has a great deal of Wit, “ but which renders him only the more “ impertinent and ridiculous.” Madam D. is very lavish in giving the Praises of Wit to whoever lived in ancient Times; for at present, such a one could never be esteem'd a Wit, whose Discourse only consisted of Injuries and Reproaches, and of all Manner of Rudeness. “ *Homer* “ paints *Thersites*, continues she, in so “ lively and distinct Colours, that the “ Ancients, struck with this Description, “ say, that *Homer* has given in his “ Poem the Ideas of all kinds of Poetry; “ and that this Passage, for Example, is a “ perfect Model of the ancient *Sille* or “ Satire: But it may be ask'd, is it proper, in an Heroic Poem, to introduce “ so vicious a Character? Nothing need “ hinder, *answers Madam D.* and I know “ no Rule that excludes this sort of “ Character from an Epic Poem; for “ this Poem may make use of whatever “ happens in Nature, or whatever can “ occur in Civil Life.” To hear Ma-

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dam D. expresses herself thus here, could one ever believe, that she had made the following Remark upon Occasion of a Passage in the 1st Book? (p. 326, 327.)

“*Vulcan*, who was lame of both Legs,  
 “could not but make a very comical  
 “Figure, when he shew’d himself so  
 “eager and forward at his Business; but  
 “*Homer* is contented with intimating,  
 “that the Gods laugh’d at such his Ea-  
 “gerness and Diligence, without ex-  
 “plaining to us the true Cause of their  
 “Laughter: He suppresses it, as *Eusta-*  
 “*thius* observes, that he may not ap-  
 “pear impertinently and unseasonably  
 “to fall into the *Sillæ* and satirical  
 “Manner of Writing,” ἵνα μὴ δοκοῖν  
 σιλλαινεῖν ἀκαιρῶς. Of those two opposite  
 and contradictory Remarks, ’tis the last  
 only is good and just; for an Epic Poem  
 admits very well of the Descriptions of  
 all sorts of Feasts and Publick Solemn-  
 nities; yea, even the Pastoral itself agrees  
 perfectly well to an Epic Poem; but the  
 comical and satirical Manner, disfigure  
 and disgrace it: In a Word, neither the  
 Follies and Extravagancies of hot and  
 passionate Men, such as *Ajax*, (3. 580.)  
 nor the silly Railleries of great Warriors,  
 such as *Patroclus*, (3. 429.) nor the Scur-  
 rility and Rudeness of Men of Wit, such



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such as *Thersites* above, can ever be proper Characters in an Heroic Poem; which, according to Mr. D. \* himself, ought to imitate only what is most excellent, and rather what human Nature is capable of doing, than what it generally does.

I proceed hence to the 9th Book, where we have the famous Embassy sent to *Achilles*. "This Book, says *Eustathius*, "cited by Madam D. (2. 430.) is very "lively, full of Action, and contains "an admirable Model of the strongest "and most sublime Eloquence, in the "judicial Way; in the Harangues and "Speeches the Ambassadors, on this "Occasion, make to *Achilles*, and in "all his Answers to them; and *Homer* "never shows the whole Force and "Strength of his admirable Art and "Skill for Political Discourses to such "Advantage, as in this Book." All the Discourses of the Deputies of *Agamemnon*, contain nothing but Lamentations upon the State and Condition of the Greek Army, and earnest and importunate Requests and Supplications to *Achilles* to come to their Assistance. Thus far then there is no Appearance of any

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\* Art of Poet. 433,

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either judicial or political Discourse, for such at least who have any Taste of the Propriety or Meaning of Terms. If we would see Examples of deliberate and judicial Discourses in Poetry, we find them in *Virgil's* Consultation of his Deities, about the Fortune of *Æneas*, in the 10th B. of the *Æneids*; in Mr. *Corneille's* Accusation and Defence of *Rodrigue*, or *Horace*. If we would see Examples of State Harangues, we find them in *Tasso's* Speeches of his Ambassadors, from the King of *Ægypt*, in his 2d Canto, in order to propole Peace to *Godfrey*, and in the Refusal of this great General; in the Proposal for the yielding up or defending *Jerusalem*, as 'tis discuss'd by *Orcan* and *Solyman*, in the 10th Canto; and this in a far more excellent Manner than the Deliberation about restoring or keeping *Hellen*, as expressed by *Paris* and *Antenor*, in the 7th B. of the *Iliad*. Again, in *Corneille's* Examination of the Question proposed by *Augustus* to *Cinna* and *Maximus*, viz. Whether he should preserve or resign the Sovereign Power; or in that other Deliberation, of the Side proper to be chose, upon Occasion of *Pompey's* landing in the Port of *Alexandria*? when they had it in their Power, either to serve him, to banish and expell

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pell him, or to deliver him up alive or dead.

But lastly, to conclude of whatever sort or kind the Speeches of *Homer's* Ambassadors were, these of *Ajax* and *Ulysses* are indeed excellent, excepting the Meanness of the Distress and Submission they here appear in, and the Falshood of the Poet's Supposition of the absolute Want and Necessity they stood in of *Achilles'* Assistance; yet *Ulysses* never theless here makes a very long and tedious Repetition of *Agamemnon's* Speech in his own Words, which takes up near half of his Discourse: But since we are to examine *Homer's* Repetitions apart, and as these Repetitions don't spoil the Discourse of *Ulysses*, taken separately, we shall say nothing of them now. I omit also *Achilles'* Answer, which is very fine, excepting that he speaks of *Agamemnon* in an insulting Manner, which the *Greek* Deputies should never have suffered, and of which yet they make not the least Complaint. But *Phenix*, perceiving *Ulysses* was cruelly refused, speaks himself; and his Discourse is one of the most monstrous that ever was committed to Writing; for first, *Phenix*, who was Governor to *Achilles*, and inviolably attached to



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to his Person and Interest, as *Phenix* himself says, (p. 104.) is actually in *Agamemnon's* Camp, who was *Achilles's* Enemy, when they first thought of sending this Embassy, and he offers his Service to be their Leader and Guide. Here is Decorum nicely observed! Madam D. herself was sensible of this Fault, yet she cannot pass it by without an Encomium: "*Phenix*, says she, (2. 445.) at " that Time very fortunately happened " to be in the *Greek* Camp, where he " went no doubt to see the Success of " the last Battle, and to relate to *Achilles* " the State of the Army, and the " Intrenchments they had made before " the Camp; but *Homer* makes no mention of this Circumstance, which has " nothing to do with the Action." I am of a quite different Opinion; for if there was any thing of more Moment or Importance than another in the whole *Iliad*, which was to have been mention'd, I affirm it was the Cause that brought *Phenix* to the *Greek* Camp, during the Absence of *Achilles*. These Additions and Supplements of Madam D. are intolerable with respect to a Poet, whom she boasts in a hundred Places, to express every thing with the utmost Exactness, (1. 302, and elsewhere) but who really abounds with

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with all sorts of Superfluities and vain Repetitions. It is surprising that *Homer* may, as he pleases, omit even the shortest and most essential Explications, or relate long and tedious Stories, tho' the most impertinent and remote from his Subject. However it be, *Phenix* begins (p. 104.) and tells *Achilles*, that he'll never abandon him, tho' he shou'd return into *Phthia*, as he had threaten'd the *Greeks* to do the next Day : But as *Homer* had a mind to introduce here the History of *Phenix's* Youth, which *Achilles* must have heard him repeat a Thousand times, how do you think he introduces it ? Even with the chimerical Supposition, that the Gods wou'd restore to him his first Vigour and Youth : " I cou'd never take any Satisfaction or Consolation, my dear Child, after this cruel Separation, even tho' God himself shou'd descend from Heaven, and promise to change my old Age into a flourishing Youth, and restore me to the same Vigour and Youth I had when I quitted Greece, to shelter myself from the Fury of my Father *Amyntor*, whom a cruel Jealousy had enrag'd against me." There is nothing which *Homer* shou'dn't have done to remove from the  
Sight

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Sight of his Reader the History of *Phenix's* Youth; whilst, on the contrary, he takes a great deal of Pains to introduce it. *Phenix*, who according to the first Rudiments of Rhetorick, ought in the Beginning to gain the Esteem of his Audience, first informs them, that his Father, his Mother, and he, made up a Family full of scandalous Disorders, and mortal Dissention. " My Father, *says he*, was passionately in " Love with a young Lady who made " him no Return, and upon her Account he despis'd my Mother so much, " that he cou'dn't endure her. My Mother, to be revenged, was continually persuading me to become my Father's Rival, and to endeavour effectually to gain this Woman's Affections, and so to prevent him; not " doubting but my Addresses wou'd " soon be receiv'd, and that my Father, who was aged and disagreeable to her, wou'd thereby become " yet more intolerable. At last I obey'd her. My Father, who immediately perceiv'd my Design, suffer'd his Passion to transport him to " such a Degree, as to utter the most " horrid Curses and Imprecations against " me, and to invoke the dreadful Furies



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“ries, beseeching them that I might  
“never have an Heir for him to ca-  
“ress or sit upon his Knees. These  
“formidable Deities, together with  
“*Pluto*, the God of the Infernal Region,  
“and cruel *Proserpine*, heard his Impre-  
“cations. I own, that at that time Grief  
“and Despair had like to have made  
“me commit the greatest of Crimes ;  
“I had almost plung'd a Dagger into  
“the Breast of my own Father ; but  
“some propitious Deity restrain'd me  
“in the Midst of my Fury, and prevent-  
“ed the Stroke, setting before my Eyes  
“the eternal Reproaches I shou'd draw  
“down upon my own Head, and the  
“odious Names of impious and flagi-  
“tious Parricide I shou'd thereby in-  
“cur.” Thereupon he resolves to fly ;  
that I may not be expos'd, says he, to  
the Resentment of my Father, instead of  
saying, *for fear of perpetrating the Crime*  
*to which I was tempted.* When he had  
made the Enumeration of all the Trou-  
bles he had escap'd, he says to *Achilles*,  
that he looks upon him as his Son ; and  
so much the more, because he cou'd have  
no other ; which makes the only Con-  
nexion of the History of his Youth with  
*Achilles* ; a Relation he only ought to  
have

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have hinted, suppressing the Causes and Occasions thereof, which were as odious as they were superfluous. "I may say, "Divine *Achilles*, adds he, (*p.* 107.) "that it was my Care and Industry that "has made you what you are." Here was indeed great occasion for Vanity and Praise. Madam *D.* herself, who was really deceiv'd by *Homer*, as we have observed elsewhere, and who is a constant Admirer of *Achilles*, that passionate, unjust, and unreasonable Madman, says here, (2. 464.) "Such as you are, *i. e.* "the greatest of Heroes, a Man equal "to the Gods. We must remark, adds "she, a little lower (465.) how much "Homer here ascribes to Education: "Achilles, tho' the Son of a Goddess, "yet it was through the Care and Inspection of *Phenix*, that he became "what he was; and indeed, where Education is wanting, the happiest Birth "is of little Importance or Signification." But, indeed, notwithstanding his Birth and Education, I shou'd not wish Madam *D.* a Son like *Achilles*; and I have for her, in particular, the general Sentiment *Erasmus* expresses, when he speaks of *Homer*, *Tales finxit Deorum filios, ut nemo sanus Paterfamilias similes sibi libe-*

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*liberos velit obtingere.\** Phenix afterwards makes tender Reproaches on Achilles (108.) about the Pains and Trouble he had in his Education, where he tells him first, "Whether you went to  
 " a Feast, or ate in your own Apartment, I was forc'd to hold you always upon my Knees, and feed you,  
 " for you wou'd take nothing from any other Hand than mine." After which, he adds in the *Greek*, translated by Madam D. in her Remarks, (2. 465.) "During your early Infancy, which was always very troublesome, you have often wetted my Cloaths with Wine which I gave you to drink, and you rejected." Madam D. has indeed suppress'd in her Text this odious Circumstance; but it is not without censuring the Delicacy and Niceness of our Age, and the Weakness of our Imagination, and the Infelicity and Imperfection of our Language, (p. 465.) We shall elsewhere sufficiently vindicate our selves at Homer's Expence from those false and vain Accusations. Madam D. says (2. 460.) that Homer forbore mentioning the Circumstance of Achilles' Continuance some Time at Ly-

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\* In the Life of D. Hieron.



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*Comedes*' Palace, because that Circum-  
 stance had nothing in it great enough  
 to deserve to be mention'd; Can she  
 find any thing more great in the Cir-  
 cumstance of the Wine before-men-  
 tion'd? But besides, does not an Epic  
 Poem admit of what is agreeable and  
 pleasant, as well as what is great and  
 noble? If she allows therein what is  
 satyrical and comical, why does she ex-  
 clude the History of *Achilles* being hid  
 among the Daughters of *Lycomedes*,  
 which is one of the most beautiful and  
 charming Fictions in all the ancient My-  
 thology? Which as it admirably repre-  
 sents, on the one Hand, the Precautions  
 of a timorous Mother, such as *Thetis*;  
 so it also does much Honour to *Achilles*,  
 and there even appears something great  
 in him in the Way and Manner he's disco-  
 ver'd. *Phneix*, after all these Preambles,  
 comes at last to the Point in Hand;  
 "Subdue and conquer your Anger, my  
 "dear *Achilles*, says he, (108.) for im-  
 "placable Hatred, and unrelenting Re-  
 "sentment, don't at all become a Man  
 "of your great Character." But as he  
 can't refrain a Moment from telling some  
 Story or other, he relates to *Achilles* the  
 Fable or Parable of Injury and Prayers,  
 which wou'd yet be somewhat obscure,  
 without

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without the Remarks and Notes of Madam D. Aftewards he represents to *Achilles* the Multitude of Presents that were offer'd him by *Agamemnon*; and passing immediately from one Story to another, he relates the very long and tedious History of *Meleager*, and that but very indifferently; for the Names and some of the Adventures of *Idas*, *Marpessus*, *Cleopatra*, and *Altheus*, he introduces in the Midst of his Narration, confounded in such a Manner, that I defy the most attentive Reader to understand it at the first, or even upon second Reading. Before he begins, he says, (p. 111.) I am going to relate it; for I speak here in the Midst of my Friends. An impertinent Parenthesis, and which had been better placed before the former tedious Relation of his Youth, than before a Story in which he had no personal Interest: However this is, the whole Affair of *Meleager*, which takes up five Pages, seems not to bear the least Relation or Connection with the Embassy; but by a Circumstance in the last Line, viz. That *Meleager* having serv'd the *Etolians* too late, after having refus'd his own Father, who fell prostrate upon his Knees before him, had lost the Present the *Etolians* then offer'd him;

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from whence *Phenix* infers, that *Achilles* might probably be reconcil'd one Day with less Glory and Advantage to himself than now, and never more find the *Greeks* in so favourable a Disposition as they were in at present. This particular Passage, or rather the whole History tending thereunto, shows, whatever *Madam D.* may pretend, (2. 469, 471.) what stress *Phenix* here lays upon the Point of Interest, and how just therefore the Reproach and Accusation is which *Plato* makes in the 3d B. of his *Republick*.

*Achilles* answers *Phenix*, calling him his Father, and giving him other honourable Titles and Epithets, that he takes it ill that he shou'd plead thus for *Agamemnon* his Enemy; yet mov'd by his Discourse, he says, that he'll consider and reason the Matter further with himself till next Morning, whether he shall go or stay, (p. 118.) Afterwards he gives a Sign to the Ambassadors to take their Leave. *Ajax* thereupon (*ibid.*) makes an excellent Discourse, if it were only upon the account of its Conciseness and Brevity; whereupon *Achilles* persisting in his Refusal, yet draws nearer and says, (120.) "Go, and for  
" an Answer, tell the *Greeks* that I shan't  
" take



upon HOMER's Iliad. 405

“ take Arms nor appear in Battle, till di-  
“ vine *Hector*, the Son of *Priam*, after  
“ having cover'd all the Shore with dead  
“ Bodies, and set the Fleet on fire,  
“ comes to threaten the Tents and  
“ Ships of the *Thessalians*.” This gra-  
dual Progress of Reconciliation in *A-*  
*chilles* appears extreme happy and agree-  
able ; and Madam D. to be sure, isn't  
wanting to set it off to the best Advan-  
tage with her judicious Remarks, when  
she says, (2. 474.) “ That after the  
“ Discourse of *Ulysses*, *Achilles* said, that  
“ he wou'd be gone the next Day ; after  
“ that of *Phenix*, he is not so resolv'd,  
“ nor determin'd upon his Departure,  
“ but 'tis uncertain ; and after that of  
“ *Ajax*, he talks no more of departing :  
“ On the contrary, he seems disposed  
“ to take Arms, but not till Danger  
“ threaten his own Ships.” This Cha-  
racter therefore of an inexorable Person  
is very artfully drawn ; but *Homer* him-  
self never thought of all this Skill and  
Art that is so much admir'd : Nay, what  
is more, he destroys in the Sequel the  
Remark of Madam D. for *Ulysses*, giving  
an account of his Embassy to *Agamem-*  
*non*, (p. 121. 122.) reports only the  
first Answer *Achilles* made him, in which  
he signified his Resolution to depart,

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which makes *Ulysses* as guilty of a sort of Infatuation, as if he esteem'd as nothing what *Achilles* said to the rest; when, on the contrary, he ought to have laid the chief Stress upon what he said to *Ajax*, to whom he had spoken last, and who had succeeded better than himself; but what is herein yet more absurd and ridiculous, is, that in relating his Embassy very lamely, he is at the same time rash enough to call *Ajax*, and the two Heralds, for Witnesses to the Truth of his Relation; supposing also at the same Time, that they were stupid enough not to contradict him. *Homer* has here again great need of Madam D.'s Assistance, who accordingly grants it him in her Remark, (p. 475.) "Twill  
 " be here demanded, says she, why  
 " *Ulysses* only speaks of the Answer  
 " *Achilles* first made him, and says nothing of the Disposition in which  
 " the Discourses of *Phenix* and *Ajax*  
 " had left him. 'Tis easy to answer  
 " this Question, because *Achilles* was  
 " obstinate in his Resentment; and  
 " if afterwards a little soften'd by  
 " *Phenix*, and mov'd by *Ajax's* persuasive Discourses, he seem'd disposed to take Arms, 'twas no way  
 " upon account of the *Greeks*, but only  
 " to

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“ to save his own Fleet, if *Hector*,  
“ after having put those to the Edge of  
“ the Sword, shou'd at last come to in-  
“ sult these. Thus this inflexible Man  
“ abares nothing of his Fury. 'Twas  
“ then an Act of Prudence in *Ulysses* to  
“ make this Report to *Agamemnon*, that  
“ so being undeceiv'd of the Hopes of  
“ Succour and Assistance, he flatter'd  
“ himself he might, with the other  
“ Commanders of the Army, take the  
“ necessary Measures to preserve his  
“ Ships and Troops.” Allowing this  
Precaution in *Ulysses*, a Precaution never  
allow'd an Ambassador, who is always  
answerable for the Truth to him who  
sends him ; yet, at least, 'twas necessary  
that those four Persons, before they  
came into *Agamemnon*'s Presence, shou'd  
have agreed among themselves to this  
particular Dissimulation. Without this  
Precaution, *Ulysses* run the Hazard of  
their contradicting him, or giving him  
the Lie. In the 11th Book, the King  
*Macaon*, a famous Physician, was wound-  
ed in the Shoulder by an Arrow shot by  
*Paris*, and thereby render'd incapable of  
fighting, (197.) *Achilles* (204.) seeing  
from the Stern of his Ship a Man which  
*Nestor* brought back in his Chariot, sends  
*Patroclus* to inform him, whether it was



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really *Macaon*, the Son of *Esculapius*, as he supposed. *Patroclus* departs to execute this Order. *Nestor* and *Macaon* being come to their Quarters, had come down from their Chariot, (*ibid.*) “ and  
 “ whilst *Enrimeson* unharnessed their  
 “ Horses, they staid some Moments upon  
 “ on the Shore to rest and refresh themselves  
 “ selves with the soft and sweet Breathings  
 “ of Air, which dried the Sweat  
 “ with which they were covered. After  
 “ being a little refreshed, they entered  
 “ into *Nestor's* Tent, and sat down  
 “ where the beautiful *Hecamede* had  
 “ prepar'd them new Honey Flower and  
 “ Onions, very proper to excite Thirst.”

Excellent Food indeed for a wounded Man, who besides is a Physician ! Here *Homer*, who according to *Madam D.* never tires the Reader with Descriptions upon pressing Occasions, as if he himself were a Person in the Poem ; or that nothing could be done while he spoke : *Homer*, I say, takes his Time while the Blood flows from *Macaon's* Wounds, to describe the Furniture of *Nestor's* Tent ; his Table of precious Wood, supported by a Foot of a Sky Blue, and his Cup that no Man could lift when it was full, because in all Likelihood it might contain Fifteen or Twenty Pints of Wine  
 or

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or Water, which vastly increased the Weight of the Vessel ; yet *Nestor* cou'd lift it with a great deal of Ease ; he who was always complaining of his Age and Infirmities ; and who, even whilst yet alive, wanted to be sustain'd or supported (1. 421.) *Nestor* and *Macaon*, after having quench'd their Thirst, notwithstanding the Wound the latter had receiv'd, (206.) discours'd together. Upon this *Patroclus* arrives : *Nestor* wou'd have him sit down, but *Patroclus* declines it : " Thou venerable Sage, says he to  
" him, (*ibid.*) I have no Time to sit  
" down ; don't detain me, I beseech  
" you ; I owe that Respect to him that  
" sent me, not to make him wait ; he is  
" impatient to know who is he you  
" brought back wounded, and I see 'tis  
" the great *Macaon*. Permit me then to  
" carry him an Answer. You know,  
" wise *Nestor* the Character of this Hero,  
" that he is violently passionate, and the  
" best and most reasonable Excuse won't  
" always prevent his Anger." Upon  
occasion of this Excuse, *Nestor* begins a Discourse of ten long tedious Pages in the *French*, and 150 Verses in the *Greek* ; all which Time *Macaon's* Wounds were a bleeding. He enlarges and insists chiefly upon the History of the *Epeans*, which  
is

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is yet worse related than that of *Meleager* before. To give an Idea of it, even to those who won't be at the Trouble to read it, I need only say, that Madam D. was here obliged to do two Things; the one, to add to the Text, in the third Page, this Connection or rather Interpretation, (208.) "But I must explain  
 "to you the Source and first Cause and  
 "Origine of this War. You must know  
 "then, &c." without which the Reader would not know what he meant or intended; and the other, to make this Remark, (2. 518.) "*Homer* observes in  
 "his History the same Method he did  
 "in his Poem, viz. to begin with the  
 "End, and return to the Beginning."  
*Homer*, as I observ'd elsewhere, has not follow'd this Method, if we take the Anger of *Achilles* for the Subject of the *Iliad*; but allowing he had it in a Poem that admits of Episodical Relations, does this Method agree to a History that shou'd have been finish'd in (or take up only) a few Minutes: However it be, *Nestor's* long Harangue wants an Apology, both with reference to *Patroclus*, who was in haste to return, and to *Macaon*, whose Wounds were still bleeding. Madam D.'s Answer to the first Difficulty is, "That *Patroclus* (2. 517.)  
 "told



upon HOMER's Iliad. 411

“ told *Nestor*, that he had not Time to  
“ sit down, and that he was in haste to  
“ carry back his Answer to *Achilles*,  
“ who expected him with Impatience ;  
“ yet here *Nestor* begins a long Dis-  
“ course, and *Patroclus* hears him out. I  
“ have met with Persons who have found  
“ fault with *Homer* for this, and think  
“ he forgot himself here, but they are  
“ mistaken: *Patroclus* indeed does not  
“ sit down, but hears this Discourse  
“ standing. *Nestor* was a venerable  
“ Prince, so considerable and worthy of  
“ Respect, that *Patroclus* neither could,  
“ nor ought to interrupt him by taking  
“ his Leave. This Discourse is so se-  
“ rious and important, it concerns *Pa-*  
“ *troclus* so near, and has so great a re-  
“ lation to *Achilles*, and the present  
“ State of Affairs, that *Patroclus* had  
“ no Reason to fear being blam'd for this  
“ little Delay.” Yet this Discourse of  
*Nestor*, so serious and important, is  
treated only as a Story or Fable two  
Pages after by Madam D. “ As to  
“ what remains, says she, (519.) this  
“ Story is inserted with much Skill and  
“ Art ; for the Intention of *Nestor* is  
“ to detain *Patroclus* till he had seen  
“ with his own Eyes the Defeat of the  
“ *Greeks*, that so being moved and affected  
“ there-

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“ therewith, he might the better dispose  
 “ him to make his Report to *Achilles*,  
 “ and to engage him the more effectually  
 “ ally to interceed with him for them.”

As to this last Reason, I ask, how it comes to pass that *Homer* shou’d have so little Care of his own Honour, Reputation and Character, how he shou’d be such an Enemy to himself, as not to say in two Words, that *Nestor*, who design’d and intended that *Patroclus* shou’d have time to see the deplorable Estate of the *Greek Army*, therefore stopp’d and detain’d him by this Discourse? Is not the Omission of so easy and obvious a Preamble, and at the same time so necessary to his Purpose, a convincing Demonstration, that he was engag’d in this Narration, as in most of the rest, only from the Forwardness of his own Inclination to impertinent Talking and Prating? As to the second Difficulty that arises from the Wound of *Macaon*, that Man who, even according to the Text it self, “ (p. 198.) was worth a whole Battal-  
 “ on,” and of whom consequently they ought to have taken a great deal of Care; Madam D. clears *Homer* thus.  
 “ We shou’d remember, says she, (2. 516.)  
 “ that *Macaon* was not so dangerously  
 “ wounded as to oblige him to observe

“ a

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“ a different Conduct and Regimen from  
“ what was ordinary and customary  
“ to him at other Times ; cordingly  
“ we see him stop sometimes upon  
“ the Shore to refresh himself ; and  
“ *Homer* says, that *Nestor* and he dis-  
“ cours'd together upon agreeable Sub-  
“ jects ; a Man dangerously wounded  
“ wou'd not amuse himself to dry his  
“ Sweat in the Air, nor wou'd he hold  
“ a long Conversation.” Thus by  
Madam D.'s own Confession, this whole  
Conduct of *Homer*, is most egregi-  
ously absurd, if *Macaon* was thought  
or judg'd to be dangerously wounded.  
See then in B. 11. p. 198. line 3. where  
you'll find these Words, *The Greeks see-*  
*ing Macaon dangerously wounded* ; and a  
little lower, p. 219. *Eurypiles* says, that  
*Macaon* being wounded in his Tent, has  
himself need of an able Physician ; but  
besides, is it not absurd to the last degree,  
for *Nestor* and *Macaon* to talk together of  
pleasant and agreeable Subjects, during  
the Defeat of the *Greeks* ? Yet the Poet  
who describes at length in this same Pas-  
sage (p. 218. 219.) the Manner in which  
*Eurypiles*, who was wounded in the Thigh  
was treated, a Person much less conside-  
rable, in every respect, than *Macaon*,  
makes no more mention of the latter. Yea,  
the



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the Inadvertency of the Poet goes even so far, that *Patroclus*, who had return'd no Answer to *Achilles* 'till the 16th B. whilst the same B. (p. 3.) in the Enumeration of the Wounded, names *Diomedes*, *Ulysses*, *Agamemnon*, and *Eurypiles*; but forgets *Macaon* for whom alone *Achilles* had sent him. *Homér* has been guilty of greater Blunders, but there are none that can characterise him juster or truer than this.

In the 14th B. in a kind of Council that was held the Moment the *Greeks* were actually beat back to their Ships; after six pretty long Discourses of *Agamemnon*, *Nestor* and *Ulysses*, *Diomedes* begins, (p. 316) and says to *Agamemnon*, who had now advised their flying three times successively in this Poem;  
 “ Behold! I here offer wiser and better  
 “ Advice than yours, if you will but  
 “ listen to it, and not despise it as  
 “ coming from a young Man. I, the  
 “ Son of the great *Tydeus*, who perish'd  
 “ not 'till after he had done immortal  
 “ Exploits; his Tomb is under the  
 “ Walls of *Thebes*: I also may be  
 “ allow'd to speak in an Assembly of  
 “ Kings and Princes. ——— *Porthius*  
 “ had three Sons, *Agius*, *Melas*, and *Oe-*  
 “ *neus*, all three worthy of the Race from  
 “ whence

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“ whence they sprung; they inhabited  
“ in the Cities of *Pleuron* and *Calydon*;  
“ but my Father was oblig'd to retire to  
“ *Argos*; thus was it decreed by *Jupi-*  
“ *ter* and the rest of the Gods; there  
“ he married the Daughter of King *A-*  
“ *drastus*, who kept him at his Court  
“ loading him with Riches and Honours.  
“ He possess'd much Land, Inclosures of  
“ great Extent, and numerous Herds of  
“ Cattle; there was no Warrior in all  
“ *Greece* who equall'd him in Reputation;  
“ but all these Things are sufficiently  
“ known to you; wherefore don't look  
“ upon me, or consider me, as an ob-  
“ scure Person, or a Man of a little Fa-  
“ mily or Birth, and don't despise the  
“ Advice I give you. Let us go, wound-  
“ ed as we are; let us go back and ral-  
“ ly our Troops, and attempt to reco-  
“ ver the Battle.” Madam *D.* thus ju-  
stifies this Digression. (2. 580.) “ *Dio-*  
“ *medes*, after having said a Word of  
“ his Birth and Family, to justify the  
“ Liberty he here takes, proposes his  
“ Advice.” This Word is a little too  
long; but it is pleasant that *Diomedes*  
shou'd wait 'till the tenth Year of the  
Siege, and the 14th Book of a Poem,  
wherein he has already appear'd an hun-  
dred

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dred times, to speak of his Birth to the *Greek* Princes; and it is still more pleasant, that after his having made a long Narration of it to them, he shou'd tell them it was what they already knew.

In the 19th Book, where is transacted the Reconciliation of *Agamemnon* and *Achilles*, after the Discourse of the King, which we have already examin'd in the Second Part of this Work, and the Answer of *Achilles*, who advis'd they shou'd go to Battle that Instant, *Ulysses* (p. 159.) speaks to *Achilles* in the following Words;

“ Divine Son of *Peleus*, What Haste or  
 “ Impatience soever you are in to go to  
 “ engage, yet lead not your Troops  
 “ fasting to attack the Enemy, for the  
 “ Affair won't be so soon decided;  
 “ wherefore command the *Grecians* first  
 “ to go and refresh themselves in their  
 “ Ships; Bread and Wine are the Strength  
 “ and Courage of a Soldier; it is im-  
 “ possible a Man that has not eat,  
 “ shou'd fight a whole Day, from the ri-  
 “ sing to the setting of the Sun; for  
 “ if his Courage shou'dn't forsake him,  
 “ yet his Strength will—— Whereas he  
 “ who has taken sufficient Nourishment,  
 “ is able to fight a whole Day; his Force  
 “ answers his Courage, and if it hap-  
 pens



upon HOMER's Iliad. 417

"pens that he falls at last through  
"Faintness or Weakness, 'tis not 'till af-  
"ter the Battle is over." How many  
Words are here for a very small Matter?  
and Madam D. can't say now, as of a  
Passage too concise in the First B. that  
there is in *Homer* always more Sense  
than Words. (I. 303.) *Agamemnon* ap-  
proving the Counsel and Advice of *U-*  
*lysses*, proposes to *Achilles* to strengthen  
and confirm their Reconciliation by a  
solemn Sacrifice, while the Troops were  
refreshing themselves. *Achilles* (B. 19.  
162.) will put off all these Ceremonies  
to another Occasion; and he who comes  
fresh out of his Tent, where he had  
rested Eighteen Days, and who has in  
his View nothing but the revenging of  
*Patroclus*, without any other Interest,  
will, like a Fool as he is, have the har-  
rass'd and weary *Grecian* Troops fol-  
low and obey his Humour and Passion,  
and begin the Battle fasting. "This  
"Evening, says he, after the Sun is set,  
"they will have Leisure enough to sit  
"down to Table; before then I can nei-  
"ther eat nor drink." This concludes  
strongly for a whole Army; and there-  
fore *Ulysses* again resumes the Argu-  
ment of the Necessity of the Troops first  
eating and refreshing themselves, and

E e

makes

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makes a pretty long Discourse, after the manner of *Eanon Eurard* in the *Lutrin*, a Mock Heroick Poem of *Boileau*, except only that he inserts therein (163.) “ a  
“ general and improper Comparison of  
“ the Ears of Corn, which fall not  
“ thicker under the Sicke, in the time  
“ of Harvest, than Men under the Sword,  
“ when *Jupiter*, who in the Day of  
“ Battle is the supreme Arbitrator of the  
“ Life and Death of Men, inclines his  
“ fatal Balance, and then the Remains are  
“ poor and inconsiderable.” He adds to this, that it is not by Fasting we honour the Dead, that we must bury them and comfort our selves ; but that, those who escape from the Fight, ought to take Nourishment ; and yet here the Debate was of taking it before the Engagement. A perpetual false Reasoning and Incoherence ! But besides, did so clear and common a Thing deserve that *Homer* should take up three or four Discourses with it ? Nor will *Achilles* suffer or permit performing the Solemnity of the proposed Sacrifice ; shouldnt *Ulysses* therefore have rather insisted upon this Particular ? And was not the Subject, at the same time, both more noble, and much more moral ?

The

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The last Books of the *Iliad* are full of the Honours which *Achilles* renders to the dead Body of *Patroclus*, and we have just seen his Impatience to be reveng'd. But, as the Dead in *Homer* must not appear more reasonable than the Living, *Patroclus* appear'd to *Achilles*, (B. 23. p. 290.) and tells him, *Achilles* you're asleep; it was upon the Shore he slept, loaded with Grief and Weariness. (Ibid.) But this signifies nothing. "Thou sleep'st, "*Achilles*, and hast forgot me; it is not "*a living Friend thou neglects, but a "*dead One: Bury me without any longer Delay, and the Gates of the bless'd "*Elysian-Fields* will then be open'd to "*me.*" Did *Achilles* want to be instructed in these first Rudiments of the *Pagan* Faith? He, who in the 24th B. (383, 384.) told *Priam* so many fine Things, according to *Madam D.* (3. 603.) concerning Vessels of Good and Evil? In a Word, if *Achilles* knew the Torment the Soul of *Patroclus* was in, he was in the wrong to go to slay *Hector*, before he had solemnized the Funeral of a Man, who was so impatient to be bury'd: But if he made use of all these Delays, to render the Obsequies of his Friend more solemn and remarkable, according to



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the Doctrine of his Time, and the Command of his Mother, (*B. 19. p. 149.*) *Patroclus* was in the wrong to complain.

We have another *Example* of these *E'lementary Instructions*, given to *Persons* of the *Iliad*, by others. Thus *Nestor*, seeing his Son *Antilochus* ready to enter the Lists in the Chariot Race, which is performed in the 23d B. approaches him; and tho' he was conscious of his great Prudence and Wisdom, (*p. 306.*) yet he admonishes him in the following Manner: " My Son, *says he*, tho' you are so  
" young, *Jupiter* and *Neptune* have re-  
" garded thee favourably, and have  
" so perfectly taught thee in this Art  
" of Driving a Chariot, and in the Ma-  
" nagement of all Sorts of Horses, that  
" you are become one of the best Horse-  
" men in all *Greece*; wherefore you  
" don't want much Instruction; but  
" you have very heavy Horses, and  
" such as are neither strong nor nim-  
" ble." Thereupon he cautions his Son, the best Horseman of all *Greece*, not imprudently to drive on either Side his weak and heavy Horses. " Arm your-  
" self therefore with all your Art and  
" Skill, *continues he*: Art often does  
" more than Strength; it is more by  
Art

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“ Art than Strength, that a Carpenter  
“ succeeds in his Trade; and it is by  
“ Art, not Strength, a Pilot saves his  
“ Vessel, in the Midst of the greatest  
“ Storms and Tempests.” Comparisons  
which to no Purpose prolong an useless  
and superfluous Instruction: “ He who  
“ has Judgment, *adds he*, never looses  
“ Sight of the Goal, but still moves  
“ thither in the shortest and straitest  
“ Course, making his Horses approach  
“ it as near as possible: In order to  
“ this, bend a little towards the Left,  
“ restrain the Horse on that Side, a-  
“ nimating the other on the Right,  
“ and giving him more of the Rein,  
“ ’till you double the Post so near,  
“ that it will seem as if the Nave  
“ of the Wheel glided around it: But  
“ take special Care not to hit against  
“ the Stones, for fear of wounding your  
“ Horses, and breaking your Chariot to  
“ Pieces,” If *Antilochus* had need of  
these Instructions, he was not very like-  
ly to gain the Prize. Madam D. says  
here, (3. 577.) “ Those that shall take  
“ the Pains to read the Description,  
“ which *Sophocles* gives in his *Electra*,  
“ of the Chariot-Races, where he feigns  
“ that *Orestes* was kill’d, will easily own  
“ that

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“ that this Tragical Poet very well  
 “ knew how to make his Advantage of  
 “ this Passage in *Homer*.” But there is  
 a great Difference between the One and  
 the Other: The Governour of *Orestes*  
 relates a Fact, in which the most com-  
 mon Circumstances might and ought  
 to be inserted; but they shou’d not  
 therefore take Place in the Instructi-  
 ons given to a Man, of much Art and  
 Skill, such as those of *Nestor* to his  
 Son.

The Death of *Hector* gives occasion  
 in the *Iliad* to several Lamentations.  
*Andromache* makes two; one in B. 22.  
 upon seeing from the Walls the Body of  
 her Husband dragg’d along by the Hor-  
 ses of *Achilles*; and the other in the  
 24th B. over the Body of her Husband,  
 when it was brought back by *Priam*:  
 The First is half as long again as the  
 Second, which is evidently against Na-  
 ture; because the first Sight of the Bo-  
 dy of a Husband so barbarously treated,  
 ought to have deprived *Andromache* even  
 of the Power of bewailing her self;  
 whereas, after the Space of twelve Days,  
 which interven’d between these two  
 Lamentations, this Princess, then less  
 overwhelm’d with her Misfortunes, but  
 more sensible of the Consequences she  
 then



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then saw it wou'd produce, ought to have made longer and more eloquent Lamentations. Nothing is more ingenious than the Manner in which Madam D. has conceal'd in her Translation, the Meanness which the Text of the first Discourse, render'd literally, wou'd have appear'd in. She even don't entirely discover it us in her Remarks ; where she only informs us, after *Eustathius*, (3. 561.) that some wou'd have rejected here as spurious the Words that represent *Astyanax* as ready to lead the Life of a real Beggar. " An Orphan, *says Homer, which I here literally translate,* " addresses himself to all his Father's " Friends ; he pulls one by his Cloak, " and another by his Robe or Vestment : " If any One of them, mov'd with Compassion, offers him his Cup, it is only to wet his Lips, without moistening his Palate : A Youth who has a " Father and Mother, expells him the " Feast with Blows and Menaces ; Begone hence, for your Father don't " eat with us, and the Child returns " with Tears in his Eyes to his Widow " Mother." These are Manners, which by being very simple, are the more savage and barbarous. But lastly, to repeat it once more, a Woman who is as it

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were Thunder-struck at the Sight of her Husband drag'd along Headlong in the Dust, is absolutely incapable of entering into any such Detail. *Homer* has very wisely avoided this Fault, in the Second Lamentation, which is also much finer than the First.

We have elsewhere excused certain uncommon Passages of the Affliction of *Priam*; but he makes him hold in the 24th B. Discourses that can't be vindicated. All the *Trojans* were assembled in his Palace, to sympathize with him in his Affliction; notwithstanding all the Disguise of *Madam D's* Translation, (p. 364) he tells them in so many Words, " Begone hence, ye wicked infamous  
" Men, have you not enough of Domestic Grief of your own, without  
" coming to augment mine?— You  
" will quickly be sensible of the Loss  
" you have sustain'd; and at the same  
" time he runs after them with his  
" Scepter,

H, καὶ σκηπτύνω διὰ τ' ἀνέρας ω. 247.

" and drives them from his Apartment."  
At this Instant of Fury he calls his Sons, 365. and among the rest *Helenus*, who was a Prophet, and upon the account  
of

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of this Quality, very considerable in his Family, (1. 493.) and intriged at the Slowness with which they executed his Orders, he crys out; "Why don't ye  
" make more Haste, Cowards that ye  
" are? Would to the Gods ye had all  
" perish'd upon the Shore near the Gre-  
" cian Vessels, instead of my dear *Hector*;  
" Oh! how cruelly hath Fate persecuted  
" me; all the brave Children I had I have  
" lost. — Implacable *Mars* has tore  
" them from me, and has left me these  
" Cowards, addicted to Lying and  
" Falshood, and more fit to dance at  
" Night with Ladies, than fight with  
" their Enemies." Madam D. observes  
(3. 597,) that "*Homer* has here  
" drawn to the Life, the Disorder and  
" Immoralities of young debauch'd  
" Princes, to whom the Infirmities of  
" an aged Parent gives all manner of  
" Liberty, because it is not in his  
" Power to restrain them." And as  
for my Part, I say, that *Homer* here  
only represents a mistaken and inju-  
dicious Poet; and indeed, Father *Rapin*  
himself very justly censures *Priam*, for  
wishing to see all his Children dead, in-  
stead of *Hector*. He ought to have ex-  
press'd his Grief, says this judicious Cri-  
tick, in more refined Strains of Elo-  
quence.

*Priam*



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*Priam* arrives at the Tent of *Achilles*; and indeed in the Discourses there held between those two Persons, there appears several beautiful Strokes, but they are not without their Faults. *Priam*, for Example, begins very well, by recalling to *Achilles*' Mind, the Image of his Father *Peleus*, whom he ought to remember by seeing him; but at the End of his Discourse, he again repeats the same Thought. I remember, that the Commentators upon *Cicero*'s Letters to *Atticus*, a Translation of which has lately been publish'd by a very eloquent Person, of very great Merit and Abilities, never fail to divide one Letter into two, whenever the same Thing occurs twice. This Rule of Criticism wou'd spoil all, if 'twere applied to the Discourses of *Hammer*. *Achilles*, being sensibly touch'd and affected with seeing *Priam* fall prostrate before him, raises him up, and makes him a very long consolatory Discourse. 'Tis here he relates, (383.) in a very obscure manner, so obscure, as might even have deceiv'd *Hesiod* himself, the Theological Parable of the Three Tuns, according to *Hesiod*, or only Two according to *Eustathius* and Madam D. (3. 603.) one whereof is fill'd with Good, and the other with Evil. *Jupiter* takes out

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out of both, for those who lead a Life, mixt as usual both with Happiness and Misery; but there are Persons for whom it seem'd *Jupiter* had only distributed from that fill'd with Miseries and Afflictions. The Law of Enumeration then requir'd that *Homer* shou'd also speak of those for whom *Jupiter* seem'd only to distribute from that which was full of Happiness and Bliss, or that only contain'd Felicities and Happiness. But *Homer* forgot this. Madam D. has supply'd this by an Addition of an intire Phrase of her own, *viz.* the Tun of pure Pleasure and Delights is reserv'd for the Gods: (p. 384.) She also gives us in her Remarks, the Reason of her making this Addition: "I thought my self," *says she*, (3. 604.) oblig'd to add "these two Lines to make the Connection; for *Achilles* cou'dn't pass without a Mean, from those to whom the Gods distribute nothing but Miseries and Afflictions, to his Father *Peleus*, whose Life was a Mixture both of good and bad Fortune." If Madam D. judges that *Homer* made a Verse of this, because that it was reasonable and proper for him to do so, I dare say, that she is as ignorant of the Genius of this Poet, as those who have thought they

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they ought to reject other Verses as spurious, because wretched ones : As for me, if I found in the *Iliad* a Discourse of but thirty Verses, that were just in all its Parts, and so adapted to the Subject of which it treats, and the Character of him that speaketh, that it could not be repeated elsewhere, neither by the same Person, nor any other ; in which, lastly, there was nothing either omitted or superfluous, I would certainly reject it as plainly spurious and suppositious. *Priam* (386.) thanks *Achilles* for his Consolation ; and this Return of Thanks, which consists only of ten or twelve Lines, is indeed extremely beautiful : But after this so affectionate and rational a Return, the terrible *Achilles*, with Eyes full of Fury, (*ibid*) says, “ Old Man, don’t excite my Anger and “ Passion” ; adding a great deal more without either Sense or Coherence. Yet *Achilles* takes out of *Priam*’s Chariot the whole Ransom of *Hector*, leaving there only a single Tunick and two Veils to wrap and cover his Body : After which, he says to *Priam*, “ Your Son “ is restored to you :” And setting up for a Story-Teller, at the End of the Poem, he relates to *Priam* the old and well-known History of *Niobe*, who did  
not



upon HOMER's Iliad. 429

not forbear eating, tho' she had lost her Children; whence he concludes, that *Priam* ought also to take Nourishment; and to say the Truth, it was now become extremely necessary for him, after having pass'd twelve entire Days without taking the least Subsistence. (p. 292.) But *Homer* forgets ever and anon the Character of the Person who speaks, to shew his own Talent in Haranguing; or rather he scarce ever introduces his Persons, but only to make 'em relate his Stories; and 'tis but a small Matter with him to violate the general Character of his Persons in his Discourses: He also inserts Things quite contrary to the actual Passion of him who speaks; and even sometimes to the Possibility of the Discourse itself. I'll illustrate this by Examples: In the first B. (p. 16.) *Achilles*, in the utmost Height of his Passion against *Agamemnon*, speaks to him thus: " But I have one Thing more to  
" say to thee, and I'll confirm it with  
" an Oath; I swear then by this Scep-  
" ter, which, since it has been cut off  
" from the Trunk of the Tree whence  
" it sprung upon the Mountains, pro-  
" duces no more Leaves nor Branches,  
" nor grows green any more, since the  
" Iron has strip'd it of its Bark and  
" Leaves;

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“ Leaves; I swear to you, I say, by  
 “ this Scepter, that the *Greeks* bear at  
 “ present in their Hands, to whom *Ju-*  
 “ *piter* has trusted the Execution of  
 “ Law and the Administration of Ju-  
 “ stice; and this is the greatest Oath I  
 “ can take; that when a Day shall come  
 “ wherein the *Greeks* will be in extreme  
 “ Necessity of *Achilles’* Assistance, and  
 “ when you cannot succour nor assist  
 “ them, you shall call upon him in  
 “ vain.” Here we have in the Dis-  
 course of a Man speaking with the ut-  
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 as intolerable Confusion of Phrase and  
 Syntax. In B. 12th, (p. 232.) “ *Astus*,  
 “ seeing himself repulsed in a Combat,  
 “ sighs for Rage; and striking the Earth,  
 “ cries out with Grief mixt with Indig-  
 “ nation, Great *Jupiter*, you are then be-  
 “ come a lying God, like the rest; for I  
 “ did not expect that the *Greeks* wou’d  
 “ resist this Attack, and escape this  
 “ Day from our Hands: Nevertheless,  
 “ like Bees who have built their Hives  
 “ upon a steep and craggy Rock, and  
 “ seeing themselves attack’d by Hun-  
 “ ters, won’t yet abandon their Houses,  
 “ but courageously defend their Trea-  
 “ sures

upon HOMER'S *Iliad*. 431

“ fures and Families ; so the *Greeks*,  
“ tho’ they are but Two against this  
“ great Number, won’t yield the Pas-  
“ sage, but with the Loss of Life, or  
“ that they are made Prisoners.” A ve-  
ry proper Comparison indeed, to the  
Discourse of a Man in Despair ! *Homer*  
sometimes inserts such Parenthesis, even  
in loud Cries, where they are, as it  
were, impossible : “ Imagine *Menelaus*,  
“ who in B. 17. (p. 73.) cries out with  
“ all his Strength, that he may be  
“ heard by the whole Army, and who  
“ says, Princes and Captains, who re-  
“ ceive from *Agamemnon* and *Menelaus*  
“ the Reward of your Services, and  
“ command each your several Troops,  
“ because *Jupiter* has given you the  
“ Command, for ’tis from him pro-  
“ ceeds all Honour and Dignity, the  
“ Battle is so hot on all Sides, that I  
“ have not Time to call one by one ;  
“ but let every one come of himself  
“ and perform his Duty.

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Absurdity ; but almost all the Discour-  
ses in the *Iliad* have a Fault in it self  
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serv’d, wou’d contribute much more to  
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upon HOMER'S *Iliad*. 431

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This Fault consists, in that his Persons scarce ever say what they ought to say, with Reference to the present Occasion: This is what even the *French* call *Discourse mal Dialoguez*, i. e. which is ill connected with the Subject in Hand, or the Thing that went before. I shan't run over all the Faults of this Kind; but the few that I shall instance in, will satisfy the Reader about an infinite Number of others of the like Sort. In B. I. (p. 11.) *Achilles* reproaching *Agamemnon*, that his only Inducement to enter upon this War, was the Love he bore to him, expresses himself thus: "I have  
 " no particular Quarrel with the *Tro-*  
 " *jans*; they never offended me, by car-  
 " rying away my Oxen or Horses; nor  
 " did they ever ravage the fruitful  
 " Plains of *Pthia*." Nor was this the Occasion of the War, that *Agamemnon* and *Menelaus* commenced against the *Trojans*; nor did the two Brothers complain that the *Trojans* had ever carry'd off their Oxen or Horses, or plunder'd their Provinces; the Occasion was the Rape of *Helen*. Thus therefore, to have stated the Fact right, *Achilles* shou'd have said, as 'tis express'd in the *French* Play;

Et



upon HOMER's Iliad. 433

*Et jamais dans Larisse un lâche ravisseur  
Me vint-il enlever ou ma femme ou ma  
sœur ?*

But what follows this Sentence in *Homer* is yet more pleasant: "Between  
" the Fields of *Ilion*, says *Achilles*, and  
" the Plains of *Larissa*, there are too  
" many Mountains, Seas, and Forests."  
Would not one be apt to imagine from  
thence, that *Lacedemon*, where the *Tro-*  
*jans* went to carry off *Helen*, was just  
by *Troy*; yet it was almost half as far  
again from *Troy* to *Lacedemon*, as from  
*Troy* to *Larissa*. I have not examin'd  
whether *Thessaly* abounded with more  
Mountains and Forests than the *Pelopo-*  
*nesus*; but I know that to come from  
*Phrygia* into the *Morea*, we must pass  
over as much Sea again as when we  
come into *Thessalia*.

The same *Achilles*, answering to the  
Threatning *Agamemnon* made him for car-  
rying off *Briseis*, says, (p. 12.) "After  
" we had plunder'd some *Trojan* Towns,  
" my Booty was never equal to yours;—  
" and I must be contented with what was  
" less considerable." Was that indeed  
a just Subject of Complaint? He that  
carry'd off *Briseis*, (3. 501.) so beauti-  
ful

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ful a Princess, that he lov'd her with the same Affection as if she had been his Wife. *Homer* himself was sensible of this Inconsistence and Incongruity, and endeavour'd to save it with so ridiculous an Epithet, that even *Madam D.* thought her self oblig'd to suppress it. I return to my Ships, says he in the *Greek*, with only one trifling, but be- lov'd Present; ὀλίγον τε φίλον τε α 167. I am of the same Opinion with *Madam D.* that he had better have let the Fault alone, than repair it in this manner.

In B. 2. (p. 67.) *Agamemnon*, preparing his Troops for Battle, advises them,  
 “ to put themselves in a Condition to  
 “ undergo the Fatigues of this Day, for  
 “ they would not have a Moment's  
 “ Rest till Night came, and put a Stop  
 “ to the Fury of the Engagement; to  
 “ Day, Sweat will pierce through your  
 “ very Bucklers; your Hands shall be  
 “ tir'd with giving Blows, and pushing  
 “ your Pikes and Javelins; and your  
 “ Horses out of Breath, with drawing  
 “ the Chariots so long in the Midst of  
 “ Death, Slaughter, and Desolation.”

*Agamemnon* here enumerates the Particulars of a future Battle, as if it were already past; and it wou'd seem as if he meant to discourage his Troops:

But,

upon HOMER's Iliad. 435

But, besides depending upon the Promise that *Jupiter* had caus'd to be made him in a Dream, whereby does he judge that the *Trojans* shou'd defend themselves till the Evening? He even speaks as if the Battle, not yet decided, should be interrupted by the coming on of the Night. Lastly, Who told him that the *Trojans* would sally from their Walls, and not expect him upon their Ramparts, as they had done hitherto? Does he already rely upon the general Foolishness of the Poem, according to which, of about a hundred thousand *Greeks*, *Achilles* was the only Person the *Trojans* had to fear.

In the 24th Book *Priam* going out in order to redeem the Body of his Son, finds without the Gates of the City, *Mercury* in the Shape of a Mortal, who asks him, whether he now left *Illium*, as despairing any longer to defend the Place after the Death of *Hector*? Thereupon *Priam* seems surpriz'd that this Man should already have heard the News of the Death of *Hector*, which happen'd twelve Days before: (375.) "Who are you then, " says he to him, who are so well acquainted with the unhappy Fate of " my Son?"



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'Tis almost the same in the Discourses of the Deities. *Apollo*, in the same 24th B. complaining of the Indignities that *Achilles* exercised for twelve Days together upon the Body of *Hector*, expressly reproaches the general Assembly of the Gods, (*p.* 351.) for yielding and complying with all the unwarrantable Humours and Passions of *Achilles*; and at the End of the same Discourse, (352.) he says; "But let him take heed he  
" don't draw down upon himself the An-  
" ger of the Gods." How could he draw it down by those Humours and Passions with which they all comply'd?

The Poet himself sometimes in his Narration contradicts the Discourses of his own Persons: In B. 21. (*p.* 238.) it is said, that *Apollo* having refus'd a Challenge from *Neptune*, turns another Way and marches off; for Shame and Respect prevented his engaging with his Father's Brother; and yet the same Instant his Sister *Diana* reproaches him for boasting in the Midst of the Assembly of the Gods, that he wou'd engage with *Neptune*, and that the whole Court of Heaven shou'd be Witnesses of his great Exploit: Here is a God indeed that shows a profound Respect for his Father's Brother.

These

*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 437

These last Objections will undoubtedly appear small, and even trifling and partial, to Readers who are inclin'd to justify *Homer* even in his greatest Absurdities. But am I oblig'd to fill up this Criticism with nothing but Instances grossly vicious and shocking? The instancing in such Examples, has indeed a Philosophical Use, because it serves to show the miserable State of the Humane Mind, when possess'd with Partiality, in regard to the Objects of its Esteem and Admiration. But some nicer and more refin'd Remarks may be of greater Use in Poetry, by establishing that Justness of Thought and Expression, the want of which is *Homer's* true and genuine Character; for if the Mist and Cloud of Prepossession were once expell'd, we shou'd find every Page in him abound with gross Mistakes and Blunders, such as we have above remark'd, not to mention all his other sort. Father *Rapin* was perfectly well convinc'd hereof, when he opposes to the irregular Digressions of *Homer*, " That exquisite  
" Vein of good Sense that prevail'd at  
" Rome in the Age of *Augustus*, and  
" which was the true Character of all  
" the famous Men that writ at that

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“ Time, and whom we still look up-  
“ on and consider as the only Models  
“ of the Justness of Discourse, and  
“ of that admirable Art and Talent  
“ of Writing that now obtains among  
“ us.” \* But we intend to treat ex-  
pressly of *Homer's* Style and Composi-  
tion in another Place. †

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### CHAP. IV.

#### *Of the Morals and Sentiments.*

**W**E join the Sentiments and Morals together, because the Sentiments being the Affections which the Poet or his Persons express, with respect to some Objects, are always either agreeable, or contrary to some Rule of Morality. I shall begin with the Sentiments of *Homer*, which only appear vicious to me in Point of Judgment, or for want of Propriety of Speech. In B. 17. (p. 69, 70.) 'tis said, that “ *Hector* “ took the immortal Arms of the Son of

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\* *The Comparison of Homer and Virgil in Paris Edit. p. 92.*

† Chapter VI. and last.

“ *Thetis,*



upon HOMER's Iliad. 439

" *Thetis*, which the Gods, who inha-  
" bit the high *Olympus*, had given to  
" *Peleus*, and of which he had made  
" a Present to his Son; but the Son,  
" adds the Poet, had not the good For-  
" tune to become old like him under  
" this Armour." What signifies grow-  
ing old under it, if he is to have a bet-  
ter before his Death? Indeed he would  
not have grown old under the first, tho'  
he had liv'd an hundred Years: Yet this  
Passage fails not to obtain Madam D.'s  
Admiration. " *Homer*, says she (3.  
" 440.) never fails of introducing all  
" the tender Sentiments which the Sub-  
" jects he treats of can suggest, and  
" which produces a charming Effect in  
" his Poetry.

The second Example of a false Sen-  
timent, or one wrong apply'd, is yet  
more remarkable: *Aeneas* in B. 20. p.  
192.) furiously attacks the Shield of *A-*  
*chilles* with his Pike; " *Achilles*, fright-  
" ed and astonish'd, ταρβήσας, v. 263.  
" at the Violence of the Blow, advances  
" his Arm to defend himself, not doubt-  
" ing but *Aeneas*' Pike wou'd pierce his  
" Buckler thro' and thro'. Unthinking  
" foolish Man, adds the Poet, he ne-  
" ver reflected that the Gifts of the  
" Gods never yield to any humane  
F f 4 Force."

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“ Force.” To make this Epiphonema good Sense, it shou’d have been applied to *Æneas*; Foolish Man! who knew not that this Stroke wou’d be of no Effect, and that the divine Armour of a God cou’d easily resist the utmost Efforts of poor Mortals! And as to *Achilles*, besides the Fright which here is very unjustly imputed to him, it is absurd to imagine he had so soon forgot the Property of his Armour; or, lastly, his Imprudence, which is happy for him, and which deceives him to Advantage, don’t deserve that sympathising Tone which *Homer* here assumes.

To this purpose I remember a Passage in the 17th B. (p. 71.) where the Poet says, that *Hector*, as soon as he had put on *Achilles’* Armour, puts himself at the Head of the Confederate Troops of the Allies, who seeing him adorn’d with these bright and shining Arms, took him for *Achilles*. He assembles together all the Commanders, &c. I decide nothing as to this Sentiment, which is of an ambiguous Nature; for if, on the one hand, it does some Honour to *Achilles*, it wou’d seem on the other, that the *Trojans* ought to have fled at the first Appearance of a Man, the Sound of whose Voice alone was capable

upon HOMER's Iliad. 441

capable of putting them into Disorder ; (B. 18. p. 121.) but the most pleasant Sentiment with respect to *Achilles*, is that of *Agenor*, (B. 21. p. 245.) who could not resolve to fly, without having first engaged the terrible *Achilles*, as if the Flight with which he intended to conclude the Action, were not sufficient to eclipse all the Glory of the Attempt.

It is not only in Actions of Hazard and Danger, that *Homer* assigns to his Heroes mean and doubtful Sentiments, but he even abandons their Honour upon all Occasions. *Ajax* and *Ulysses* engaging together in the Games in the 23d B. (p. 333.) passionately desire to conquer, not for the Glory of having vanquish'd an illustrious Adversary, as another Poet wou'd have express'd it ; but to carry off the fine Prize of the *Tripod*, or three-footed Stool. I shall be answer'd perhaps, that the *Tripod* was the Sign of Glory and Victory ; but I answer, that the Poet at least here transgresses in the Choice of his Turn and Image.

With reference to the Contests or Engagements at Games, I'll insert here a Criticism which will clearly show that *Homer* sometimes stifles those very Sentiments that he himself has rais'd in his Readers, with respect to his Heroes.

In



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In the entire Perusal of the *Iliad* no Person appears under so amiable a Character as *Ajax*. *Helen* says of him in the 3d B. (p 112.) that he is a Prodigy of Valour, and one of the strongest Bulwarks of the *Greeks*. For my part, I go yet further ; and for his general Character, I look upon him not only as a complete Soldier, but a Man of Virtue and Honour, Good Sense and Courage ; in a Word, as a Person of the greatest Merit in the whole Poem. The Idea I have given of *Ajax*, turns to *Homer's* Advantage, and shews that in general he knew how to endow his Persons with a Soul and proper Sentiments. But we censure and blame some peculiar Parts of the Character, only because they are contrary to the general Idea and Notion we have receiv'd of them from his Poem : For instance, upon Occasion of *Ajax*, here's an Incident that at the same time violates both against the Probability of the Things, and the Sentiments and Inclination of the Reader. In the Games of the 23d B. *Ajax* does *Achilles* the Honour to present himself in three different Engagements ; in the first, he engages *Ulysses*, and seems conquer'd by him. Since *Ulysses* throws him down, to the great Surprize and

Asto.

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Astonishment of the Spectators, (p. 334.) some will answer no doubt to this, that the Poet, in giving the Advantage to *Ulysses* over *Ajax*, thereby intended to show the Superiority of Wisdom above Strength. But I must always be concern'd that *Ajax* shou'd be chose for the unhappy Example of such an Application; and this the rather, because I far prefer the bold and noble Simplicity of *Ajax*, to the doubtful and suspicious Prudence of *Ulysses*. I shall say nothing of the second Combat, where *Diomedes* (p. 340.) puts *Ajax* in Danger of his Life, tho' the Reader might have wish'd to have seen the Ballance carried even to the end between these two Heroes; but I can't hold my Anger when I see *Ajax* conquer'd by *Polypætes*, (p. 342.) one of the most obscure Men in the whole Poem. It shou'd a Barrenness of Invention, to have introduced three times together the same Person; but 'tis a want of Taste, and an entire Ignorance of what belongs to Sentiment, ever to have once introduced such a Person to be overcome.

The Poet sometimes presents us with the Sentiments of the Gods as falsely and injuriously express'd, as those of Men. In the 24th B. *Priam* wou'd make

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a Present of a Cup to *Mercury*, who offers himself as a Guide to him in the Shape of a young Officer in *Achilles'* Army. *Mercury* answers him, (p. 376.) You would tempt me, my Lord, because you see that I am young, but hope not to persuade me; I'll never receive this rich Present during *Achilles'* Absence; I know my Duty, I fear and respect my Prince too much, never to rob him so basely. Here *Mercury* carries his Probity and Fidelity to the utmost Nicety; but immediately after he adds, *Achilles* won't fail to punish me for so mean and sordid a Piece of Avarice. Here is the Discourse of a Prince of high Birth ending like that of a vile Slave; and Principles of Honour, all of a sudden, changed into a Fear of some such sordid Punishment as that of the Stocks.

*Homer* has yet less regard to Decorum than to Honour, in the Sentiments of his Persons. The Duel between *Paris* and *Menelaus* being resolv'd upon, the *Greeks* and *Trojans* are heard to cry out with a loud Voice, (B. 3. p. 117.) "Powerful *Jupiter*, who hast a Temple upon Mount *Ida*, and who art surrounded with Majesty and Glory, grant that the Author of this fatal War, and all these



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“ these Mischiefs that it has already occasioned the *Greeks* and *Trojans*, may fall by the Power of his Adversary, and that he may descend into the Regions of *Pluto* ; and that after his Death we may make a solid and durable Peace.” What indeed will become of poor *Paris*, seeing himself thus loaded with the Curses and Imprecations of both the Armies ! I can't conceive how he could resolve at all to engage. The *Trojans* also offer, at the same time, in this Prayer an enormous Insult to *Priam*, who comes to express (*ibid.*) the tender Affection he had for his Son. There had undoubtedly been more Decorum and Delicacy observ'd in the Character, if the Poet had said that the *Trojans* made, in the Secret of their Souls, the same Wish as the *Greeks*, tho' they did not publickly proclaim them, out of Respect and Consideration to the Prince.

Upon other Occasions, *Homer* makes his Persons speak rudely by way of Compliment : For Example, in the 21st B. *Juno* speaking to *Vulcan*, says to him Word for Word, Rise up my poor Cripple, my Son, ὀρσεο κολλυπόδιον ἐμὸν τέκος. φ. 331. Madam *D.* thereupon relates a Reflection of *Plutarch*, who says, that *Juno* calls her

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her Son Cripple, the more to express her tender Love for him ; and that by this *Homer* would expose those who are ashamed of such natural Infirmities and Misfortunes, never esteeming that deserving Reflection or Reproach, which is not in itself infamous or vicious ; nor any thing shameful, which does not depend upon us, but merely upon Fortune : Yet I durst not, *adds she*, preserve this in the Translation : “ For our Term *Boiteux*, “ or lame, and the *Greek* Word *χαλκῦπιδιον* “ are two Terms very different : This “ is obvious and sensible even to an “ Ear the least nice or delicate.” I would have justified this Passage of *Homer*, by alledging the Liberty of a Mother with respect to her Son : A Liberty which shows at the same time an affectionate and tender Remembrance of her Son becoming lame, meerly by attempting to defend her. But *Plutarch* and *Madam D.* thought it proper to make a general Rule for this Freedom and Liberty, which is absolutely wrong ; for, tho’ indeed there is no just Occasion to be ashamed of bodily Infirmities, and that we ought to support them with a chearful and becoming Demeanor ; yet, as in themselves they are afflicting, Civility and Politeness, founded upon common

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tion Humanity, requires that we never needlessly recall the Idea to such who labour under them. The fine Sound of the Greek Word *καλλυπόδιον* might perhaps allow *Homer* the Liberty of using it whilst speaking himself, as he has done in the 18th B. (σ) 371. but this was no Reason for him to make one of his Persons use it towards another.

There's another Passage in *Homer*, where one of his Persons, viz. *Agamemnon*, designing to show *Nestor* a Sentiment of Gratitude, says to him a thing in itself contrary to Decorum, and disobliging with respect to *Nestor*. (B. 2. p. 66.) *Agamemnon*, having relish'd the different Advices which *Nestor* had given him for his intended Attack, says to him, "Wise *Nestor*, you certainly surpass all the Greeks in the Art of Speaking; would to great *Jupiter*, *Minerva*, and *Apollo*, that I had but Ten such Men in my Army, so capable as you to give just Counsel and Advice, then the City of *Priam* would soon yield." Thereupon *Madam D.* makes this Remark, (350.) "*Agamemnon* don't desire Ten *Achilles's* nor Ten *Ajax's*, but Ten *Nestor's*; so far he prefers Prudence and Wisdom to Courage and Valour." For my part,



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I make a Remark just contrary to this ; and, I affirm, that *Agamemnon* shou'd have rather desired Ten *Achilles's*, and Ten *Ajax's*, and but one *Nestor*. I know very well, in general, and when only ordinary Persons are concern'd, that Ten Counsellors are better than One ; but I know also, that one good Head is alone sufficient to guide and conduct Millions of Men ; and on the contrary, the most valiant Man in the World can do nothing alone in a Battle or Siege. But however this is as to the Truth of Things, I affirm it is putting a rude and disobliging Speech into the Mouth of a King, to a wise and experienc'd Minister, that had just before given him excellent Advice, to make him say, Wou'd to God I had near my Person ten Men like you ; since the proper Compliment on this Occasion wou'd rather have been, that he thought he had no want of any other Judgment than his to govern the whole World. On the contrary, nothing is more obliging to a Soldier, or to an Officer, consider'd only as a Man of bodily Strength and Courage, than to hear his Prince say ; Wou'd to God I had in my Army ten, or even ten thousand Men like you ; because neither the brave Soldier, nor boldest

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boldest Officer, ever pretends to be alone sufficient for a Military Expedition. *Tasso* has imitated this Passage in the seventh *Canto*, but by changing what he borrows from *Homer*, he only says of Courage and Valour, what *Homer* says of Prudence: And *Godfrey* says to *Raymond*, *Cant.* 7. *St.* 69.

*O pur haveffi fra l'Estate acerba,  
Diece altri di valore al tuo simile.*

In short, the Praise which *Madam D.* gives here to *Homer*, for preferring Prudence to Valour, is fulsome and intolerable; since the whole Poem seems principally intended to show the Superiority of Valour, or rather the Brutality of one single Fool above the Prudence of *Nestor*, and all the other Commanders of the *Grecian* Army: For indeed, the Counsels of this Hero were never able to procure for the *Greeks* a Victory, which was still inseparably connected with the Personal Bravery of *Achilles*, from the ridiculous and pernicious Supposition which we have sufficiently overthrown.

Here are other Examples of Sentiments, where the Heart has a greater Share than the Understanding, and which have a plain Relation to Morality.

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*Achilles*

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*Achilles*, in the 19th B. (p. 169.) says upon Occasion of *Patroclus*' Death, " Ah! what an unhappy Stroke! I " cou'd never have sustain'd a more mortal Grief, no not even if I had been " told of the Death of my Father, who " in his Palace at *Phtia* perhaps is pining away for Grief at my Absence from " him. — My dear *Patroclus*, I could " not have been more sensibly touch'd " for the Loss of my own Son, if so " it is, that my dear *Neoptolemus* is yet " alive." There is no Man that is endow'd with any Taste or just Sentiment of Manners, whom this double Comparison don't shock; yet Madam D. pretends to justify it; but it is not by saying that *Achilles* is a Fool, an irregular and vicious Man, who neither knew nor followed any Order or Rule in his Sentiments, no more than in his Actions, or by excusing him from the Excess of his Grief, which does not always regard just Bounds and Measures: She justifies the Thing it self. " *Achilles*, says she, (3. 502.) " prefers here his Friend, not only " to his Son, but also to his Father: " One may love a Friend more than a " Son, adds she, but it is forbid to love " him more or even so much as a Father."

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“ther.” Madam D. must allow me to question here the first Part of her Proposition; and to tell her that in the Order of Charity, we are oblig’d to love Men in Proportion, as they are more nearly related to us in Blood, beyond those that are Strangers, though they surpass them in Merit: *Charitas magis debet haberi ad propinquiores quam ad meliores*;\* and so far is it from being lawful to love a Friend better than a Son, that one owes to a Son, in the ordinary State of Things, the Preference of Care and Affection, to what we owe a Father, to whom this Preference is due in the only Case of an extream Necessity: † But these nice Distinctions are not to be learn’d from *Homer*. Madam D. who takes him for her Casuist, knows much more than he, since in the second Part of her Proposition, which indeed is true, she owns, “That it is forbid to love  
“ a Friend better, or even so much as a  
“ Father; whilst *Homer* here represents  
“ his Hero, equalling in this Respect  
“ *Patroclus* to his Father, as expressly  
“ as he does to his Son. It is not,  
“ says Madam D. (*ibid.*) that he here  
“ represents *Achilles* as an unnatural

\* D. Th. sec. sect. q. 26. art. 7.

† Id. ib. art. 8. §. 9.

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“ Son ; but his Father was now in ex-  
 “ tream old Age ; *Patroclus* was young,  
 “ and might serv’d as a Father to *Neop-*  
 “ *tolemus* : *Homer* is admirable for his  
 “ Sentiments, and is always an exact  
 “ Follower of Nature.” After this Vin-  
 dication, I am fully perswaded that  
*Achilles’* Discourse must appear even  
 worse than before.

But whence comes it that Madam D.  
 whose Morality is so loose with Respect  
 to *Achilles*, shou’d yet be so strict and  
 severe with Respect to his Captives,  
 who were all in Tears about the Body  
 of *Patroclus* ? “ Under Pretence only of  
 “ lamenting him, says *Homer*, B. 19.  
 “ (p. 168.) they wept over their own  
 “ Misfortunes :” According to my par-  
 ticular Taste and Opinion, this is  
 the finest and nicest Stroke in the  
 whole *Iliad* ; nothing can be more  
 natural than the Image with which the  
 Poet here presents us of these poor  
 Girls, who, having been a long Time in  
 the Hands of a Conquerer, here renew  
 their Lamentation and Tears upon Oc-  
 casion of new Objects of Sorrow and  
 Grief which now surround them, though  
 they had small Concern therein. But  
 what Turn does Madam D. give to this ?  
 She says (3. 501.) “ That *Homer* adds  
 “ this Passage to set off the Character  
 “ of

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“ of *Briseis*, and to shew the Difference  
“ there was between her and the other  
“ Captives. *Briseis*, as a Princess of  
“ high Birth, wept for *Patroclus* out of  
“ Gratitude ; and the others lament-  
“ ing in outward Appearance, wept  
“ only from Interest.” What ! were  
these Captives obliged to weep and la-  
ment sincerely for a Man who helpt  
*Achilles* to Massacre their Parents and  
nearest Relations, and to commit a Rape  
upon their Virginity ! It is *Briseis* that  
forgets what she owes her Country, and  
who in lamenting and sorrowing for  
*Patroclus*, does it from the base Princi-  
ple of unlawful Interest she had just ex-  
press'd, when she said, that he had pro-  
mised her *Achilles* for a Husband. Ma-  
dam D. her self owns this in the fol-  
lowing odd Remark, (3. 500.) “ One  
“ may be astonish'd and surpriz'd perhaps  
“ that a Princess of *Briseis*' high Birth,  
“ shou'd even the very same Day that  
“ her Father, her Brothers, and her  
“ Husband were kill'd by the Hands  
“ of *Achilles*, admit of any Consola-  
“ tion, and even flatter her self with  
“ the Hopes of becoming Wife to their  
“ Murderer: But such were the Cu-  
“ stoms and Manners in those Days,  
“ as ancient History records, and a



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“ Poet must represent them such as they  
 “ were. But if we were to justify  
 “ them, it might be said, that the State  
 “ and Condition of a Slave was then  
 “ so hard and intolerable, that indeed  
 “ it was pardonable in such a Princess  
 “ as *Briseïs*, to chuse to become rather  
 “ *Achilles’* Wife than his Slave.” What  
 Greatness of Sentiments, quite opposite to  
 those, has *Racine* given in his *Andromache*!

We begun this Chapter with Instances  
 of Sentiments, which had no Relation  
 to Morality. In the Progress we have  
 given, we have continu’d it where those  
 two were nearly join’d and connected;  
 we shall conclude it with other Instances  
 where the Moral has no Connection  
 with the Sentiments. We are not treating  
 now of the Moral which is spread  
 and diffus’d throughout the whole  
 Poem, or that results from its general  
 Structure and Fabrick; this has been  
 fully treated and examin’d in the third  
 Part of this Work; I shall here only  
 speak of some Points of Morality which  
 are express’d in divers Parts of the *I-  
 liad*, or which *Madam D.* deduces thence  
 by her Comments and Interpretation.

There are in the *Iliad* several Maxims  
 and Sentences that are good. How  
 small soever the Merit of this is, we  
 must

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must not deny it *Homer*. " Good Advice, says *Nestor* to *Agamemnon*, B. 9. (p. 80.), as soon as you follow it, becomes your own; and will redound as much or more to your Honour, than to him that gave it. To change Opinion or Sentiment, is often a Mark of true Strength and Greatness of Mind, says *Iris* to *Neptune* in the 15th B. (p. 357.) It is a great Advantage, answers *Neptune* to *Iris*, B. 15. (p. 358.) when those that bring us Orders, are at the same Time capable of giving able Counsel." 'Tis thus all *Homer's* Morals shou'd have been express'd, clear and perspicuous, rational and judicious, and always proper to the Place in which they are introduc'd; but this is what they almost perpetually fail in. To prove which, we need only consider the very Maxims before related, which being clear, wise, and proper to the Occasion in *Madam D's* elegant and florid Translation, yet want those Qualities in the Original. The first,

Σέο δ' ἔσται ὅ, τί κεν ἀρχή 1. 102.

*Tuum erit, quodcumque quis inceperit.*

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has thrown the Criticks and Scholiasts into several different Interpretations, in their Comments upon him; of which, the most easy and natural is what follows; it is for your Advantage that they have spoke. The second,

Στρέφεται μὲν τε φρενες ἐσθλῶν. ο. 203.

*Mutabiles quidem mentes bonorum.*

literally signifies the Minds of good Men are changeable, which in this Proposition is a pernicious Falshood. Lastly, the third,

Ἐξ λόγῳ καὶ τὸ πετυχαίνει, ὅτ' ἀγγέλλῃ.

\*Αἰσιμα. εἰδῆ. ο. 207.

*Benè verò id agitur, cum nuncius equitatem novit.*

It is a great Happiness when an Envoy knows what is Just, is only a common Proposition that may be apply'd to every Thing.

Homer has other Maxims, which tho' good in themselves, are spoiled by his Application of them. This Application sometimes renders the Maxims pernicious; as the mutual Condescension which

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*Juno* proposes to *Jupiter*, in B. 4. a Con-  
descension laudable in general, but very  
faulty in his Application of it to both  
their unjust Designs : We have spoken  
of this elsewhere. At other Times the  
Application only renders the Maxim  
dull and insipid ; such is that Sentence  
of *Antiloebus* on occasion of *Eumelus*,  
whose Chariot was broke to Pieces in  
the Games in the 23d. B. " Why did not  
" he address his Prayers to the Immor-  
" tal Gods ; he had not then prov'd un-  
" successful, and arriv'd the last, (p. 322.)  
" Madam D. says thereupon, (3. 581.)  
" This Passage is remarkable, for Ho-  
" mer plainly insinuates herein, that  
" Men cannot succeed in their De-  
" signs without the help of Prayer."  
This is very well said in general ; but  
with relation to the present Occasion, I  
shou'd conclude, that if all the Com-  
batants had address'd their Prayers to  
the Immortal Gods, none of them cou'd  
have been unsuccessful, or been the last  
in the Race ; which is absurd and ridi-  
culous. One must have much more  
Sense and Understanding than *Homer*,  
to speak of Prayer in just and proper  
Terms. Madam D. lays it down for  
certain (1. 283.) that reasonable Prayers  
are never denied or rejected in *Homer* ;  
the

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the Poet teaching us thereby that God never refuses to hear any but those who offer up unjust Requests and Petitions to him: Yet this Poet allows as very just the Prayer and Imprecation which the *Greeks* and *Trojans* make against *Paris*, the Moment he is going to engage *Mene-laus*: “ May the Author of this fatal War——descend into the Kingdom of *Pluto*, and after his Death may we confirm a solid and durable Peace.” This Prayer, which was never heard, and several others of a like Nature, show that *Homer* had no Intention to teach any Thing; and that it is only building upon Quickfands, to pretend to establish any Principle of Morality, either upon the Frame or Constitution of his Poem, or any the particular Facts introduc’d therein.

*Homer* knows yet less how to recommend Justice than Prayer. In a Feast of the Gods, which is mention’d in the 15th B. (p. 350.) *Juno* never receives the Cup but from the Hands of *Themis*: “ *Homer* intimating by this Fiction, says *Madam D.* (2. 597.) that Justice is the Virtue, which of all others, is the most proper for Kings, and of greatest Use upon all Occasions. It is very remarkable, adds *Madam D.* (*ibid.*) “ that

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“ that *Homer* feigns that *Themis* pre-  
“ sides at the Feasts of the Gods, to  
“ show that she ought much more to  
“ preside at those of Men.” But why is  
it? Because Men shou’d be more just than  
the Immortal Gods? But it is certainly  
a very remarkable Thing, that *Homer*,  
who strips the Actions both of Gods  
and Men, in his Poem, of all manner  
of Justice, leaves no Place for it but at  
publick Feasts; a very pleasant Refuge  
and Sanctuary for it indeed. After all,  
this is only Madam D.’s Interpretation,  
and *Homer*’s Text furnishes no such Idea,  
which neither wou’d do him any great  
Honour if it had. Madam D. assigns  
him others, which wou’d indeed do him  
a real Injury, supposing he intended them.  
In B. 9. (p. 84.) *Agamemnon* says, speak-  
ing of several Cities that he had prom-  
is’d *Achilles*, “ That his People should  
“ be justly ruled and governed under  
“ his Administration, expecting they  
“ would chearfully pay him their rich  
“ Tributes and Contributions.” Where-  
upon Madam D. makes this Remark:  
(2. 444.) “ Here is a great King, who  
“ freely owns that the Tributes which  
“ the People pay their Kings, are the  
“ Reward of the Justice which Kings  
“ pay the People; wherefore the *Greeks*  
“ call



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“ call such Tributes *θέμιστας*, which signifies the Price of Justice.” Nothing is less proper or congruous, than to look upon Tributes as the Price of Justice, which Kings owe their Subjects. Kings, as well as other inferior Magistrates, ought to render Justice without Interest, and it ought not to be bought with Money. The Word *θέμιστας*, given to Tributes, signifies, that it is just to pay them to a Prince, *quæ sunt Cæsaris, Cæsari*. For this Reason we still call them the hereditary Rights of the King or Prince; but this does not intimate, that they are therefore the Price of Right and Justice, which the King causes to be administered to his Subjects; one is very different from the other; and *Agamemnon*, by saying that his People being justly govern’d, should joyfully pay Tribute, does not therefore at all import, that Tributes are the Price of Justice; the one in no way follows from the other.

But, lastly, *Madam D.* amply repairs the Injury she does *Homer*, when she assigns him any bad Principles of which he never thought, in much oftner inventing good Ones for him, of which he yet thought much less; as when in *B. 6. (p. 243.)* *Helenus* charges *Hector* to tell *Hecuba*, that she shou’d chuse out

of

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of her own Palace the largest, richest and most magnificent Piece of Tapistry, to make a Present to *Minerva*: "By this the Poet informs us, says *Madam D.* (493, 494) that when we offer any thing to God, it shou'd not only be the best and most beautiful, but also what we love most, and that it ought to be one's own, not borrow'd from any other; for this Reason, he says, *that she chose out of her own Palace,* &c. If this last Circumstance is hereby sufficiently taught us, the same Moral may be drawn from all the Relations of Gifts and Oblations, wherever any Authors have accidentally, or otherwise, us'd the possessive Pronoun, *his, hers, theirs.* If *Homer* had the Thought *Madam D.* here assigns him, and wou'd have express'd it by an Example, I believe indeed he wou'd have had Sense enough to suppose, that a Present taken elsewhere than in the House of him that offers, wou'd have been refus'd by the Deity invoc'd; whereas here it is expressly signify'd, (p. 259.) that *Pallas* rejected the Prayer which the great Priestess sent up in the behalf of *Hecuba*, tho' her Present was her own, and not borrow'd of others. One may very justly upon many Occasions call to *Madam D.'s*

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D.'s Remembrance, what she her self says of a certain Interpretation of *Eustathius*, which appear'd to her forc'd and unnatural: " A certain Mark, *says she*, that " this cou'd not be the Meaning of *Ho-* " *mer's* Thought, is, that it is not to " be found therein, without offering ex- " treme Violence to the Text.

In general, we must not expect to find a profound and well reason'd System of Morality in the first Authors of Profane Antiquity. Morality is one of those Sciences that owes most to Length of Time, not with Reference to the first Principles, which the Creator engrav'd in the Heart of Man in his first Formation, but with Respect to its best and highest Improvements. Thus we are not to be surpriz'd, when we find in the most ancient *Greek* Authors so barren a System of Morality, and of so limited an Extent: They were oblig'd then to lay down those Foundations, which appear to us now only as so many Common-Places; and this was then also sufficient for Men, who were as simple in their Virtues, as gross and rude in their Vices. But, on the other Hand, our Authors mustn't confine themselves merely to such ancient Principles; the Difference of Times requires, that  
modern



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modern Authors shou'd suggest finer and deeper Advice, and in much more difficult Cases. In this Respect, our Tragedy infinitely excels that of the *Greeks*; especially those of *Cornielle*, who having taken his finest Subjects from the *Roman* History, has introduc'd Politicks therein utterly unknown to the earliest Antiquity. The Birth, Original, and Effects of those Politicks, is not perhaps an Advantage to Mankind; but it is an Honour and Glory to certain Authors, to have thoroughly known and understood it; and above all, to have furnish'd us Rules either to rectify and improve it, or effectually to defend ourselves against all its pernicious Effects and Consequencee.

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CHAP. V.

*Of Comparisons.*

There never was known a Poem fuller of Comparisons than the *Iliad*; and some are of Opinion, that this is one of its principal Beauties. I acknowledge it; but, in my Opinion,

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It is a very bad Character of a Poem, when the Multitude of Comparisons is one of its principal Beauties. For if the Fable had been happily contrived, the Narration very affecting, and the Sentiments well express'd; instead of finding the Comparisons so agreeable and entertaining, we shou'd then have been very much in Pain to have been so very often diverted with foreign Images. Thus, in reading the 4th Book of the *Æneids*, the Misfortunes of *Dido* so wholly possess and affect me, and I feel my self carry'd with such a Degree of Force to the End of her Tragical History, that I can't indure the Interruption of certain Comparisons, which *Virgil* seems to have introduced purely in Imitation of *Homer*; as, that of a Hind, wounded by a Huntsman; that of a Bacchanal, agitated by the God who possess'd her. In *Homer*, on the contrary, as his Poem is very long and tedious for his Subject, and that we know not for whom to be most concern'd therein, and that the same tedious Objects of Battles and Fights occur every where, we are glad there to meet with Comparisons; they refresh and amuse us, they even shine, and we are often inclin'd to prefer them to the principal and most essential Part of the Poem. Ma

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Madam D. (1. 327.) observes after a former Scholiast, that of the 24 Books of the *Iliad*, the first is the only one where no Simile or Comparison occurs. " This proves, *adds she*, that "*Homer* thought the Beginning of an "*Epick Poem* could not be too simple, "*and that great Figures* are wholly "*improper till after the Subject* has "*been clearly explain'd and deliver'd,* "*and the Reader sufficiently instructed.* "*Yet, adds she, Virgil* has not follow'd "*this Method; he has made no Diffi-* "*culty of inserting three or four fine* "*Comparisons in his first Book of the* "**Aeneid*; but what perswades me that* "*the Simplicity of *Homer* is preferable,* "*is, that he has observ'd the same* "*Rule and Conduct in his *Odyssees,** "*where in the first Book there is not* "*so much as one Comparison; there's* "*only one Image express'd in three* "*Words, as in the 1st. Book of the* "**Iliad*. This Conduct, concludes she,* "*is equivalent to a Precept or Rule."*

To this Rule and Precept of Prepossession and Partiality, I oppose a Maxim of Reason: 'Twere much better there were in the 1st. Book some Comparisons happily introduc'd, than to overload the following Books in such a Manner,

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as to enervate and spoil the Narration, and to stifle the principal Subject.

But, tho' there are in *Homer* a vast Number of Comparisons, the Subjects whence he draws them, are extremely limited; for Hunting on one Hand, and Storms and Tempests on the other, furnishes almost all. In Hunting I comprehend the Lion, the Boar, the wild Bull, whether pursued by Huntsmen, or causing Shepherds to fly; not forgetting the Eagle and the Vulture, which are Birds of Prey. Under Storms, I comprehend the Winds and their Effects, as Tempests, and even Fires and Conflagrations: I add, snowy Mountains, the Inundations of Rivers, and the Rage and Swellings of the Sea. These Objects, which are very good to be describ'd once or twice in a great Poem, being of themselves very perplex'd and confus'd, augment sometimes rather than diminish the continu'd tedious Repetitions of the Fights and Battles, on Occasion of which *Homer* presents them.

Comparisons in all serious Writings, ought to have two Qualities, Justness and Dignity: The first is the most indispensably necessary, and solely furnishes us with the Source of the particular Pleasure we expect from a

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Comparison. Madam D. ascribes it principally to those of *Homer*. "So much," says she, to show the Justness of "*Homer*, (1. 392.) This Comparison is very just, (1. 334.) This Comparison is highly esteem'd, because of "its nice and exact Justness and Propriety, (2. 541.)" All this proves that we Moderns are not so singular and ridiculous, when we require Propriety and Justness in Comparisons. Madam D. herein has the same Principles with us. 'Tis true, we find also Madam D. elsewhere affirming (3. 436.) "That when *Homer* makes imperfect Comparisons, i.e. which only agree in "one Respect, it is not that he wants Genius and Spirit to find others perfectly "just; but 'tis that these have also "their Beauties:" Thus, as one can't depend upon Madam D.'s Testimony, who is so partial to *Homer* as to have two Weights and two Measures in Favour of him, we must examine the Fact it self: Yet I don't design to run thro' all the Comparisons in the *Iliad*; and allowing there are some very happy ones, I shall only prove that in this sort of Writing, *Homer's* Taste and Manner is not juster than in any other.

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When *Homer* makes a Comparison, he often forgets upon what Occasion he introduces into his Poem the Object whence he draws it, and he as often lengthens out the Description of this Object to such a Degree, that the principal Design of the Comparison is totally confounded and buried in the Circumstance of the Description. We won't admit hereupon Mr. *Despreaux's* Vindication of him,\* who says, "That in an Epic Poem, Similies and Comparisons are not only introduc'd to illustrate and adorn the Discourse, but also to amuse and refresh the Mind of the Reader, by diverting him from time to time from the principal Subject, and presenting him with other agreeable Images." That's a wretched Poem, as we have already observ'd, where we don't find this Advantage in the Subject it self and its natural *Episodes*: Therefore I affirm that Comparisons ought only to serve for the Illustration and Ornament of the Poem. Put in a clear and full Light all the Circumstances of a Comparison which have any Relation to the Thing compar'd;

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\* *Reflect.* 6. upon Longin.



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but avoid all others. Cavellers are every Day told that it is not necessary strictly to examine all the Parts of a Subject whence a Comparison is drawn, because in this Sense every Comparison appears lame. How ridiculous then is a Poet who himself presents these improper Circumstances, which spoil his own Comparison? The Fault of *Homer* in this Respect more plainly appears in these Comparisons, where the Exposition fills seven or eight Verses more or less, and the Application only one; because of all the Circumstances of the Comparison, there is but one that agrees with his Design. Here is an Example, (B. 5. p. 207.) “ The two *Ajax's*, *Ulysses* and *Diomedes*, exhort the *Greeks*. “ All these Troops being full of Ardour “ and Courage, fear neither the Force “ of the *Trojans*, nor their Cries and “ Exclamations, nor their Insults and “ Bravadoes, but expect them with a “ firm Resolution like those thick Clouds “ which the Son of *Saturn* sometimes gathers together, and retains upon the “ Tops of Mountains, while the Storms of “ violent *Boreas*, and all other tempestuous Winds are asleep: For when they “ are awake, their violent Gusts will im-

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“ immediately vanish and dissipate this Mass  
 “ and Collection of dark Clouds: ’Twas  
 “ thus the *Greeks* expected, with firm  
 “ Resolution, the Attack of the *Trojans*.”

Madam *D.* has recourse to a particular  
 Turn, to justify this superfluous Detail,  
*viz.* by applying it to what shall hap-  
 pen in the Sequel of the Poem, “ This  
 “ Image is noble and beautiful, *says*  
 “ *she*, in the preceding Example,  
 “ (i. 468.) and one finds it so much  
 “ the more just in the Consequence,  
 “ that we see it implies the Flight of  
 “ the *Greeks*, and that the *Trojans* are  
 “ therein compared to the *North* and  
 “ other stormy Winds which dissipate  
 “ the Clouds.” But it happens some-  
 times that *Homer* charges his Compa-  
 risons not only with an useless and su-  
 perfluous, but also a false Detail, and con-  
 trary to the future Event. In the 4th  
 Book, for Example (*p.* 159.) the Poet  
 says, “ As when the violent *Zephyrus*  
 “ exercises his Tyranny over the vast  
 “ Ocean, we immediately see the  
 “ Waves rise up in great Mountains,  
 “ in the Midst of the liquid Plain,  
 “ and rolling upon the Back of one  
 “ another, dash themselves against the  
 “ Shore with a violent hideous Noise,  
 “ or beating against a high Rock that  
 “ with-

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“ withstands their Rage or Fury, and,  
“ in huge Mountains, we see them at  
“ last surmount and conquer it, and  
“ cover it with Smoak and Froth :  
“ So we saw the numerous Batta-  
“ lions of the *Greeks* advancing to  
“ Battle.” Madam D. will inform the  
Reader of the Fault of this Comparison,  
while she applauds it. “ This, *says she*,  
“ (1. 428.) is a very odd and singular  
“ Comparison. *Homer* compares the  
“ *Greek* Troops to the Waves, which  
“ driven by a West Wind, rise up in  
“ Mountains in the Midst of the Sea, and  
“ roll on and break themselves at last a-  
“ gainst the Shore : And since this Image  
“ gives a disadvantageous Idea, which  
“ answers not to the Event, for the *Greeks*  
“ beat and drove back the *Trojans*, he  
“ mends and corrects it, by adding,  
“ that the same Waves beating against  
“ a proud Rock, get the better of it,  
“ raising themselves above it, and at  
“ last cover it with Weeds and Froth ;  
“ which are as it were the Trophies  
“ of its Defeat, and their Conquest  
“ and Victory. In ordinary Compari-  
“ sons, 'tis the Rock that stands firm  
“ against the Fury of the Waves ; but  
“ in this it is the Waves that subdue the  
“ Resistance of the Rock. This Idea



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“ is great and noble, and perfectly  
 “ well represents and describes the Suc-  
 “ cess of the approaching Combat.” The  
 sole Difficulty of disentangling all this,  
 renders the Comparifon vicious ; but  
 when ’tis unravel’d, we see ’tis still am-  
 biguous, and presents it self under a  
 double View, or with two contrary Faces  
 or Appearances ; of which, the first  
 is absolutely false and contrary to the  
 Fact the Poet is about to describe ; and  
 which therefore wants to be changed in  
 the second.

But after all, we don’t commonly take  
 a Comparifon for a Prophecy ; ’tis only  
 Madam D. or rather *Eustathius*, who  
 violently force us into such Speculati-  
 ons ; ’tis fufficient if the Comparifon a-  
 grees with the present Fact, without  
 going further : But even this is often  
 wanting in those of *Homer*. In B. 20.  
 (p. 186.) “ The Son of *Anchises*, and  
 “ the Son of *Peleus*, advance between  
 “ the two Armies to engage one ano-  
 “ ther : *Aeneas*, with his Pike in his  
 “ Hand, advances first with a fierce and  
 “ threatning Aire, his Body all cover’d  
 “ with his Buckler ; the terrible *Achilles*  
 “ meets him like a Lion that had laid  
 “ waste and desolate a whole Country,  
 “ and about whom the Inhabitants of  
 “ all

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“ all the neighbouring Villages were  
“ gathered together to deliver the  
“ Country. At first, this fierce Animal  
“ marches without making the least  
“ Haste, as despising his Enemies; but  
“ as soon as some of the Huntsmen  
“ have wounded him, he turns about,  
“ with his great Jaws wide open, cover'd  
“ with Foam, his Heart inflamed  
“ with Fury, beating his Sides with his  
“ Tail, the better to excite himself to  
“ fight, and with his Eyes all sparkling  
“ with Fire, he throws himself into the  
“ Midst of the Enemy, either to satisfy  
“ and glut his Revenge, or die pierced  
“ through and through with their Javelins.  
“ 'Twas thus *Achilles*, full of  
“ Strength and Courage, march'd against  
“ the magnanimous *Aeneas*.” Of what  
Use is the Circumstance of the Lion's  
first marching so slowly, and who, as  
soon as he's wounded by a Hunter, turns  
about, with his Jaws wide open, and  
his Eyes sparkling with Fire, throwing  
himself in the Midst of the Enemy who  
attack him? *Achilles* has not yet been  
wounded, nor will be on this Occasion;  
he don't throw himself about to the  
Right and the Left, amidst the *Trojans*,  
but marches directly up to *Aeneas*,  
between the two Armies, who make  
way

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way for both of them. But here the Comparison of the Lion seems wholly to fail. This fierce Threatning and terrible Courage all terminates in that long and ridiculous Conversation we have already examined in the Third Chapter of *Homer's* Speeches and Harangues; so that even *Madam D.* says on this Occasion, (3. 517.) "What becomes of all the Rage and Fury of *Achilles*; is it extinguished all of a sudden? When he first takes up his Arms, one hears the Gnashing of his Teeth, his Eyes all sparkling with Fire and Fury, that he seems already to have devoured his Adversary; and yet as soon as he approaches *Aeneas*, all this vanishes." *Eustathius* says hereupon, "That *Homer* often takes Delight to surprize his Reader, by presenting to him quite another Thing than what he expected: He expected here to see a furious and terrible Engagement terminate in the Death of one of the Heroes; but he sees both the Heroes retire without so much as the slightest Wound, after a very calm Conversation, follow'd by a slight Duel.

*Homer* sometimes multiplies many Comparisons upon the same Subject, which



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which show, that he is not at all careful in observing any Justness or Propriety ; for then he would not so abruptly carry away the Mind of the Reader from one to another : As when, in B. 15. (p. 383.) he says, " That *Hector*, all sparkling with Fire, attacks the *Grecians*, " as a violent Wave rising up." The Idea here of the Wave, serves only to extinguish that of Fire, which immediately preceeds it. 'Tis thus the Thing compared is often by him placed between two Comparisons quite different ; of which, one preceeds and the other follows. " As when we see, *says he*, in B. " 9. (p. 210.) two young Lions, whom " the Dam had brought up in Blood and " Slaughter, in the Midst of a Forest, " throw themselves upon the Cattle, " and carry Horror and Desolation even " into the very Shepherds, leaving every where cruel Signs of their Rage " and Fury, till at length they themselves fall into the Hands of the Shepherds ; just so we see these two young " Warriors, who after having sown every " where Blood and Desolation, yield at length to the martial Prowess of *Æneas*, and fall to the Ground, like lofty " Pines, standing upon high Mountains, " overturn'd by the Violence of the " Winds."

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“Winds.” “With what Skill and Art,  
 “says *Madam D. hereupon*, (1. 470.)  
 “does *Homer* pass from one Image to  
 “another! After having, by the Com-  
 “parison of the two Lions, given us  
 “an Idea of the Courage of the two  
 “Brothers, he then gives us an Idea of  
 “their Height and Stature, by the I-  
 “mage of the lofty Pines.” It would  
 seem to me, from this last Application,  
 that I should have been before apprized  
 of the Height and Stature of those two  
 Brothers, to judge of the Comparison,  
 It is, as in B. 16. where the Poet says,  
 (p. 1.) “That *Patroclus* presented him-  
 “self before *Achilles*, with his Eyes,  
 “which like a Fountain that continu-  
 “ally rolls down its Waters from the  
 “Top of a steep Rock, shedding and  
 “overflowing his Face with a Torrent  
 “of Tears.” It is *Patroclus*’ great  
 Height and Stature, says *Madam D. here-*  
*upon*, (3. 405.) that furnish’d *Homer* with  
 this Idea; and where, pray, is this  
 great Height and Stature of *Patroclus*  
 signified, or so much as intimated?  
 The very Idea thereof is destroy’d  
 the next Instant by another Comparison  
 of *Achilles*. “My dear *Patroclus*, you  
 “weep like a young Child that follows  
 “his Mother, and still looking upon  
 “her

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“ her with Eyes drown'd in Tears, stops  
“ her, till at last he forces her to take  
“ him in her Arms.” *Patroclus* with  
his tall Stature in his Mother's Arms  
wou'd be a pleasant Sight, and pro-  
duce a merry Effect; or else we may  
be allow'd to say, that this second Idea  
of *Homer* shews *Patroclus* to have been  
of a low Stature.

*Menelaus* seeking *Antilochus* in the 17th  
B. with a Design to send him to *Achil-  
les* to inform him of the Death of *Pa-  
troclus*, (p. 100.) “ is compared to an  
“ Eagle, whose Eyes are more piercing  
“ than all the Birds of the Air, and from  
“ whose Sight, when he seems even  
“ lost in the Clouds, a Hare, tho' shel-  
“ ter'd under the thickest Shade, can't  
“ conceal himself; for he darts down  
“ upon him like an Arrow, and carries  
“ him up in his Air: 'Tis thus, divine  
“ *Menelaus*, you cast your Eyes over  
“ the whole Army, to find out the Son  
“ of *Nestor*; at last you found him on  
“ the Left Wing, rallying his Compa-  
“ nions.” I shall say nothing of *Mene-  
laus*' seeking out a Friend, being com-  
pared to an Eagle's darting upon his  
Prey, nor of the Impossibility of any  
Affinity between those two Ideas, of a  
Man in the Hurry of an Engagement,  
with



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with the Swiftneſs of an Eagle's deſcending from the Clouds. I am not ſo much ſhock'd at theſe firſt and obvious Incongruities, as at that of an horizontal View, ſo groſſly confounded with the View of a Bird upon his Flight. This Inadvertence ſhews the Poet to have but little Taſte for the polite and beautiful Arts whence this Compariſon is taken, and none at all for the Juſtneſs and Propriety of Ideas.

The preceding Compariſon was unhappily choſe; but here follows one directly contrary to the Thing compared. We may remember that *Homer*, according to *Madam D.* her ſelf (i. 383.) pays a Complement to the *Greeks*, by oppoſing their Manner of going to Battle, to that of the *Barbarians*: Theſe march with a confuſed Noiſe, but the *Greeks* with a profound Silence. Indeed the Poet in B. 3. (p. 97.) ſays;  
 “ That the *Trojans* advanced with a  
 “ confuſed Noiſe, and loud and pier-  
 “ cing Exclamations and Outcries, like  
 “ Birds, and eſpecially Cranes under  
 “ the Roof of Heaven, when ſhun-  
 “ ning Winter and the Northern Rains,  
 “ fly, making a great Noiſe, towards  
 “ the Sea-Shore, carrying Death and  
 “ Terror among the *Pygmies*, upon  
 “ whom

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“ whom they dart down from the middle  
“ Region of the Air. But the *Greeks*, full  
“ of Martial Fury, marched in a pro-  
“ found Silence.” But what will you say,  
if this Comparifon of the Cranes, accom-  
pany'd with other Birds yet more loud  
and noify, fhould be apply'd to the  
*Greeks*? I don't fay in a like Circum-  
ftance, but in the fame individual  
One; the Poet being only diverted  
by the Enumeration of the Troops,  
the Place, Time and Fact being the ve-  
ry fame; for on this Occafion he had  
exprefs'd himfelf thus in the fecond B.  
(p. 71.) “ As when we fee in the Mea-  
“ dows of *Affus*, upon the *Cäiftræan*  
“ Shore, numerous Flocks of wild Geefe,  
“ Cranes and Swans, darting down from  
“ the upper Region of the Air, clap-  
“ ping their Wings, and lighting in  
“ great Bodies upon the Earth, ma-  
“ king great Noife and Cries, caufing  
“ the Meadows to refound; fo the  
“ Squadrons and Battalions were feen  
“ to advance from their Tents and  
“ Ships towards the Plain that is wa-  
“ tered by the River *Scamander*. So  
“ marched the *Grecian* Phalanx, breath-  
“ ing Blood and Slaughter againft the  
“ *Trojans*.” We pay great Refpect

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to *Homer*; but if a modern Poet had fallen into the like Contradiction, we shou'd tell him that he was more stupid and noisy than the Cranes and Geese he here mentions.

I am particularly shock'd at certain Comparisons in *Homer*, which present to the Mind a Situation quite contrary to that of his Personages. In B. 16. (p. 47.) *Patroclus* in perfect Health wounds *Cibrian*, and flies upon him like a Lion that had receiv'd a Wound. In the 22d B. (p. 270.) *Hector*, after flying before *Achilles*, presently throws himself upon him, as upon a timorous Hare. In the 24th B. (p. 379.) *Priam* having lost his Son by the Hand of *Achilles*, enters *Achilles'* Tent, like a Man who was himself guilty of Murder. It may be reply'd, they'll tell me, that the Comparison falls upon the Action, and not upon the State of the Persons. I answer, that if the Comparison is not always proper to express the Situation of the Persons; which yet wou'd be better; at least it ought not to draw aside the Mind of the Reader so prodigiously, that he shou'd feel spring up within him a quite different Sentiment from the

Compa-



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Comparison it self, and the Thing intended to be illustrated thereby: Can I, for Example, possibly be affected in the same Manner with reference to a Father, who has just lost a Son, the main Prop and Support of his Family, as for a Murderer who flies from Justice that pursues him? When Chance presents to *Homer* any of those Comparisons, that rightly inform the Mind of the proper State and Condition of the Subject, his Admirers know sufficiently how to praise him. " While  
" *Achilles*, says *Madam D.* (3. 529.)  
" upon a Passage in Book 21, fighting at  
" the Head of the Land Forces, throws  
" the *Trojans* into the River *Xanthus*,  
" *Homer* compares him to a consuming  
" Fire that drives along Swarms of  
" Grasshoppers, and obliges them to  
" precipitate themselves in the Water: But when *Achilles* is upon the  
" Water with the *Trojans*, then he compares him to a large Dolphin pursuing  
" a Shoal of small Fish. This Remark,  
" adds *Madam D.* which *Eustathius* quotes  
" from the ancient Interpreters of *Homer*, shows the Justness of this Poet  
" in his Images." And for my Part, I  
say that the Justness of this Image, rather makes us sensible of the Falseness and Impropriety of most of the others.

I

After

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After all, we don't censure or condemn any other Differences in the Subject of the Comparison, and the Thing compar'd, but only those that divert the Impression, which it was the Poet's Business and Interest to make upon the Mind of his Reader; for as to other Differences, if there were a Law to forbid them, then no Comparisons cou'd be made. Madam D. after *Eustathius*, perfectly confutes the vain Criticism of some Ancients upon the Comparison which *Homer* makes (B. 22. p. 263.) of *Achilles*, his persuing *Hector* without being able to overtake him, to a Man that runs after his Enemy in a Dream. These Authors censur'd and blam'd this Comparison for its representing a very quick and rapid Course and Action, by an Image of Rest and Indolence; for nothing can be more calm and tranquil, say they, than a Man in Sleep: But, as Madam D. very judiciously answers, (3. 552.) *Homer* compares the Race of those two Heroes, not to the Rest a Man enjoys when asleep and in his Bed, but to the swift and rapid Course that then passes in his Imaginations. This Opposition of these two States and Conditions does not hurt the Comparison. But this Image of a Dream,  
which

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which is but a Sketch in *Homer*, has been finish'd by *Virgil* in the 12th Book of the *Aeneids*, where he represents *Turnus* beginning to be sensible of his Weakness and Inferiority in the Combat he was engaged in with *Aeneas*.

*An Antique Stone he saw ; the common  
Bound*

*Of Neighb'ring Fields ; and Barrier of the  
Ground :*

*So vast, that twelve strong Men of mo-  
dern Days,*

*Th' enormous Weight from Earth cou'd  
hardly raise.*

*He heav'd it at a Lift : and pois'd on  
high,*

*Ran stagg'ring on, against his Enemy.*

*But so disorder'd, that he scarcely knew*

*His Way : or what unwieldy Weight he  
threw.*

*His knocking Knees are bent beneath the  
Load :*

*And shiv'ring Cold congeals his vital  
Blood.*

*The Stone drops from his Arms : and  
falling short,*

*For want of Vigour, mocks his vain Ef-  
fort.*



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*And as, when heavy Sleep has clos'd the  
Sight,*

*The sickly Fancy labours in the Night :  
We seem to run ; and, destitute of Force,  
Our sinking Limbs forsake us in the  
Course :*

*In vain we heave for Breath ; in vain  
we cry :*

*The Nerves unbrac'd, their usual Strength  
deny ;*

*And on the Tongue the faltering Accents  
dye :*

*So Turnus far'd : whatever Means be  
try'd,*

*All Force of Arms, and Points of Art  
employ'd,*

*The Fury flew athwart, and made th' En-  
deavour void.*

This is indeed what really happens in Dreams, which proceed from some Obstruction in the Brain, that often presents to the Mind Things full of Difficulties. It is this Effect, or rather Disorder of Nature, we shou'd chiefly mind and have respect to, when one wou'd introduce Dreams in serious Discourses. For if on the one Hand it is not permitted to write down these idle Fancies and Conceits, these vain and useless Chimeras, that originally occur in Dreams,  
and

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and which Persons of Sense banish even from common Conversation; it seems to me yet more ridiculous and absurd to present regular Dreams, such as that of *Scipio*, of which *Cicero* has made as serious and rational a Discourse and Conversation, as could have been held in a Closet, where they had met on Purpose. The Length alone of a Dream takes away the Probability thereof; and therefore I don't approve either in the Ancients or Moderns, certain Fictions they have presented us under the Name of Dreams, and to which this Supposition yet agrees so much the less, as they are better follow'd and sustain'd.

But Nature perhaps could never have been better represented in this sort, than it is by *Ransard*, in a Passage of his *Franciade*, which it may be allow'd me to insert because of its Brevity, though there occurs no Comparison therein. The Poet supposes that *Francian* being at the Court of the King of *Crete*, the two Daughters of the King fall violently in Love with him: The eldest of which more unfortunate than the youngest, having declar'd her Passion for the young Prince, by one of her Confidants, suffer'd a cruel and hard Repulse. Thereupon she gives her self up to secret

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cret Grief and Anguish, which afterwards terminated in her Death; but first, the Poet thus describes the Dreams that disturbed her during the Darknets of the Night.

*Sometimes she seemed to wander all alone,  
thro' Forests, amidst Rocks, or on the  
Banks of Rivers, surrounded by wild  
Beasts; Francian, the amorous Stranger,  
then seem'd Sword in Hand to come and  
save her from Danger; sometimes after  
having thus revenged her, he himself of-  
fer'd her up to be devoured; then wou'd  
he save her half dead from the Lions;  
and his Assistance both served and hurt her.*

Homer sometimes draws his Compari-  
sons from Things that never happen in  
Nature. In B. 4, for Example (p. 134.)  
“ *Minerva* descends from the Top of  
“ *Olympus*, with the same Swiftneſs as  
“ that of a Star, which *Jupiter* ſends  
“ for a fatal Omen to Fleets at Sea, or  
“ Armies at Land, which breaking looſe  
“ from the higheſt Roof of Heaven,  
“ falls into the middle Region of the  
“ Air; and after having run through  
“ an immenſe Space, at length divides  
“ it ſelf into a thouſand ſparkling  
“ Flames. ’Twas thus the Goddess  
“ descended



*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 487

“descended upon Earth between the  
“two Armies.” This is a Phenomenon  
absolutely unknown to any Thing that  
went by the Name of a Star, which is  
the Word and Term by which *Homer* here  
expresses it; but suppose some Meteor or  
other had some time put on this Appearance,  
tho’ I never heard or read of any  
such, this Division of the Meteor into a  
thousand Fires, spoils the Comparison;  
for did *Minerva* thus divide her self into a  
thousand Parts between the two Ar-  
mies?

At other times, *Homer* presents Things  
that seldom or never happen, as if they  
were seen every Day; thus he compares  
the Sighs of *Agamemnon* (B. 10. p. 125.)  
to Flashes of Lightning following one  
another without Intermission, and tra-  
versing the Heavens, at the usual Time  
of Snow. Father *Bossu* justifies *Homer*  
upon this extraordinary Proposition,  
by an Instance of Thunder that fell in  
a certain Year in the Month of *January*,  
upon a Beam in the Church of *Châlons*,  
and upon the Roof of the Abby of *Châly*.  
Suppose that *Homer* had seen by Chance  
a like Event; yet in the Manner of ex-  
pressing it, he shou’d have intimated,  
that he himself look’d upon it as a Thing  
rare and uncommon. Then indeed, the  
Allegation

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Allegation of such a rare Fact, proves that one knows the Particulars of Nature; but 'tis to abuse the Readers to advance without any Restriction, that Flashes of Lightning follow one another without Intermision, and traverse the Heavens before the usual Time of Snow.

This same Snow which *Homer* makes use of more than once to represent the Multitude of Darts that fell upon the Soldiers in Battle, as in B. 12. (p. 231, 240.) is likewise imploy'd in B. 3. (p. 42.) to express the Abundance and Rapidity of the Words of *Ulysses*: But 'tis not the Exactness of Judgment or Justness of Taste, that associates or unites such Objects; and besides nothing can be a greater Reflection upon an Orator, than to be compared to Snow. *Eustathius* acknowledges this upon the same Passage: \* And so far as I can remember, there was a *Greek* Orator, whose insipid Coldness got him the Sirname of Snow, by way of Derision.

Nobleness and Grandeur is a second Quality required in the Comparisons of an Epick Poem. I might authorize this

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\* P. 408. *Rom. Edit.*

upon HOMER's Iliad. 489

Rule, by as many Passages, where Madam D. boasts of the Greatness and Majesty of *Homer's* Comparisons, as those I have already alledged where she brags of their Justness. "What Grandeur is  
" express'd in this Image, says she,  
" (2. 392.) This Comparison is very  
" noble, (2. 552.) The Poet raises the  
" Majesty of *Agamemnon* by two Comparisons: *The one taken from the Gods, and*  
" *the other from a Bull*, the first of which  
" is for those of a refin'd and sublime  
" Judgment and Apprehension, who are  
" capable of conceiving the Finess and  
" Delicacy of the Allegory; the other  
" is for those who wanting this Elevation, require that Images drawn  
" from a sensible Object, shou'd be presented to them, but such as are grave  
" and noble," (1. 357.) 'Tis true also that Madam D. says, (2. 513.) "That  
" we shou'd be very often deceived, if  
" in judging of a Comparison, we go  
" to examine whether the Subject from  
" which 'tis borrowed is noble." This is the two-edged Sword with which Madam D. defends *Homer*; but which often serves only to do him a Mischief. Thus, as Madam D. does not seek the Truth in her critical Remarks, so neither shall we look for a Rule to direct  
our



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our Judgment in her Notion of Comparisons. But here is what I believe Reason will answer to such as impartially consider the Matter.

*First*, That the Perfection thereof consists in uniting Majesty and Propriety in the same Comparison: And on this Occasion I shall hazard a small Piece of Criticism, which yet I don't lay down as decisive, but wholly deliver up to the Judgment of the Reader. *Homer*, to give an Idea of the Progress of the Waters of *Scamander*, whose Waves swelled up and overflowed its Banks to drown *Achilles*, makes use of a Comparison delicate in its Choice, and which in one Sense has more Justness than any other in the whole *Iliad*. " As  
 " when the Director of a Fountain, says  
 " he, (B. 21. p. 224.) brings it into  
 " his Gardens, about his Plants and  
 " Nurseries, smoothing the Passage, and  
 " removing every Thing that might oppose its Course; the ductile Waters following the Direction given,  
 " and rolling themselves with a Murmur to be heard at some Distance into the gentle Descent, which he has  
 " artfully contrived for them, get the  
 " Start, and even run before him that directed their Course; so the Waves of  
 " the

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“ the River *Xanthus* pursue *Achilles*, and  
“ overtake him, which ever Way he  
“ turns ; for the Gods are always more  
“ powerful than Men.” Yet this Comparison in my Opinion is not without two considerable Faults : One is its being less than the Thing it represents, and the other which is a Consequence of the first, is its not expressing the Danger. These two Faults don't always render a Comparison vicious, but they render this so, in my Opinion, because there is in Nature something greater, and at the same Time juster and more proper to express the Agitation of the River *Scamander*, and the Situation of *Achilles*; namely, the Flux of the Sea upon a Bank of unequal Height, which sometimes deceives the Mariners, who thinking to gain the Point of Land, unhappily find themselves catch'd and surrounded by the rising Waters, from which they can only with Difficulty save themselves. To this it may be objected, “ That the *Greek*  
“ Readers knowing little or nothing of  
“ the Flux or Reflux of the Sea, which  
“ is never distinctly seen but upon  
“ the Coasts of the wide Ocean, and  
“ not in the Mediterranean. *Homex*  
“ shou'dn't take a Comparison from a  
“ Fact they were ignorant of.” But  
were

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were they better acquainted with Thunder in time of Snow, or the Star that divided it self into a thousand Flames? Besides nothing is finer than to take occasion from a Comparison, to inform a Reader of a Fact curious in Nature, provided, first, 'tis well establish'd and clearly explain'd, before the Comparison is made.

*Secondly*, Though an Epic Poem in general requires Majesty and Greatness in its Comparisons, yet I believe this Property is not so strictly requir'd as that of Justness and Propriety. There are even Comparisons which are vicious, if I may be allow'd to say so, by Reason of their excessive Majesty and Greatness, *i. e.* which are so far superior to the Thing compar'd, that 'tis with Difficulty we can unite or compare together the Ideas: Such as the Comparison above cited from the 19th B. (*p.* 125.) " When the Thunderer prepares  
" to overflow the Earth with a Deluge  
" of Rain, or cover it with Hail or  
" Mountains of Snow, that keep it  
" from the Eyes of Mortals; or when  
" he is about to excite fatal Wars, we  
" see Flashes of Lightning follow one  
" another without Intermision, and traverse the Heavens: Thus the Sighs  
" which



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“ which *Agamemnon* sent up from the  
“ Centre of his Heart, were as conti-  
“ nual and uninterrupted, and he was  
“ in a perpetual Agitation.” Omitting  
the Difficulty already hinted, of Thun-  
der and Lightning in the Time of Snow,  
because we have before spoke of it, I shall  
now only say, that the Comparison here  
apply'd to the Sighs of a Man, is unna-  
tural and forc'd to the last Degree; and  
that 'tis impossible to find in the whole  
Compass of Nature, Objects more dif-  
ferent and remote.

*Thirdly*, the simplest Things may fur-  
nish very happy Comparisons, provided  
their Simplicity be set off with a beau-  
tiful Choice of Terms, and that Elegance  
of Expression that is indispensably re-  
quir'd in an Epic Poem. Thus I ap-  
prove, as well as *Madam D.* all the  
Comparisons taken from Agriculture, a  
pastoral, or even a rustick Life, when  
the Description of them is gracefully  
and correctly drawn with Beauty and  
Propriety; but I am also of Opinion,  
that Comparisons taken from simple  
Subjects, have no Title to enter into  
serious and important Poems, but upon  
the Account of their most accurate Pro-  
priety and Justness. I allow, for Exam-  
ple, this Comparison of *Homer* in the

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11th B. (p. 167.) "As two Companies  
 " of Reapers, ranged at the two Ends  
 " of a large Field, where *Ceres* displays  
 " all her Fruitfulness and Riches, with  
 " mutual Emulation strive who shall ad-  
 " vance swiftest one against the other,  
 " and cut down vast Heaps of the Ears  
 " of Corn; thus the *Greeks* and *Trojans*  
 " furiously engage one another, and  
 " cover the Earth with dead Bodies."

But I can't allow of that in B. 5. (p.  
 205.) "As when in a spacious Corn-  
 " Yard, yellow *Ceres* assembles her  
 " Reapers, who being assisted with the  
 " favourable Breath of the Westerly  
 " Winds, Winnow in her Sight the  
 " precious Gifts which this Goddess  
 " makes to Men, separating the Chaff  
 " from the Grain: We see Heaps of  
 " this Chaff and Straw whiten'd and  
 " cover'd with Dust: So were the  
 " *Greeks* then seen running to Battle all  
 " white and cover'd with Dust, rais'd  
 " by their Horses Feet, and that as-  
 " cended in great Clouds to the Skies."

First, this Comparison is somewhat  
 confus'd and perplex'd, and Madam  
*D.* cunningly and artfully explains it in  
 her Remarks, seeming only to praise it.

"*Homer* has recourse, says she, (1.  
 " 466.) to a Comparison taken from a

" Corn-

upon HOMER's Iliad. 495

“ Corn-Yard, where Threshers sift and  
“ winnow Corn; for then the Wind  
“ driving along the small Chaff and  
“ Straw, raises here and there a thou-  
“ sand little Heaps, that seem all white  
“ with Dust, with which they are co-  
“ ver'd by the same Winds that assem-  
“ bled them.” But how can these lit-  
tle Heaps of Stubble that lie upon the  
Ground, most of which are not above  
three Fingers high, represent Soldiers  
furiously engaging in Battle.

It is much the same in a Comparison  
of B. 13. “ *Helenus* (p. 290.) lets fly  
“ an Arrow, and *Menelaus* throws a Jave-  
“ lin; the mighty and terrible Arrow  
“ of the Son of *Priam* strikes upon the  
“ Middle of the Cuirass of the Son of  
“ *Atreus*; but it flies back again with-  
“ out any Effect: As we see in the  
“ Middle of a spacious Corn-Yard, the  
“ Corn fly up in the Air from the Bot-  
“ tom of the Fan, which throws them  
“ up, and beats them back, to expose  
“ them to the soft Breezes of the West  
“ Wind; so the terrible Arrow, drove  
“ back by the Cuirass of the valiant  
“ *Menelaus*, bounds into the Air, and  
“ flies afar off.” There is none but  
who is sensible of the great Incongruity  
and Difference betwixt the Rebound of  
an



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an Arrow, shot horizontally against a firm Buckler, and the Motion of Thousands of Grains of Corn, toss'd to and fro on high in the Air by a Fan. Madam D. was very sensible of the Unhappiness of this Comparison; for she makes a more serious Apology for it than for any other; and her Admiration warmly incenses her against the Poverty of the *French* Language. This is her ordinary Remedy to vindicate *Homer*, in those Passages that displease us. "I am often astonish'd, says she, (2. 564.) that our Criticks and Scholiasts, who do every thing they can to make *Homer* appear ridiculous, have not took Advantage from this Passage; for certainly nothing cou'd appear more so in *French*, than to say, *Comme on voit des pois & des feves sauter en l'air*; i. e. As we see Peas and Beans leap and jump in the Air. Most of those who are ignorant of the *Greek* would herein be deceived, and applaud these great Criticks; but those who understand *Homer*, will plainly see there is nothing ridiculous therein but the Translation, and would despise him that could not find out the infinite Difference between these low and trivial Expressions, and those the  
" Poet

upon HOMER's Iliad. 497

“ Poet uses, which perfectly shews the  
“ mighty, and, as it were, enchanting  
“ Power of Poetry, which expresses no-  
“ bly the meanest Things, and employs  
“ the most common Terms with such  
“ Art and Industry, as to render them  
“ great, noble and harmonious.” We  
shall treat of this Subject in the following  
Chapter; for here we are not concern'd  
with the Meanness of Words, Style or  
Expression. I have not criticis'd the  
Comparison of the Terms *Peas* and  
*Beans*, since Madam D. has not us'd  
them in her Translation whence I made  
the Quotation; we don't judge the Com-  
parison better in using the Word *Corn*,  
because indeed 'tis vicious, for want of  
Justness and Propriety; which Vice is  
more discernable in Comparisons drawn  
from mean Subjects, which don't answer  
the Dignity of an Epic Poem. 'Tis on  
this Account I also condemn the Com-  
parison which *Virgil* makes of a Queen  
under Anguish and Torment, to the  
Spinning of a Top; because the Rela-  
tion of these two Objects is not happy  
enough to repair the Meanness, or, to  
speak more freely, the Vileness of the  
Comparison, with which even Children  
themselves are shock'd.

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*Fourthly*, There are Comparisons, the Justness whereof, tho' perfect, don't make amends for their Meanness: Such, at least with respect to our Manners and Customs, is his Comparison of an Hero with an Ass. We find it in the 11th B. of the *Iliad*, which Madam D. has thus very artfully translated (*p.* 200.) "As  
 " we see the strong and patient Ani-  
 " mal, but slow and slothful, force his  
 " Way into a Corn Field, notwithstanding  
 " all the Clamours and Efforts of  
 " Children that are set to watch him,  
 " and the Blows that fall upon him  
 " on all Sides, thrusts himself into the  
 " Crop, and beating down Multitudes  
 " of Ears on the Right and Left, makes  
 " a terrible Havock: The Children may,  
 " if they please, follow and surround  
 " him, but he mocks and despises all  
 " their united Forces, and even disdains  
 " so much as in the least to hasten his  
 " slow Pace; and they don't drive him  
 " out but with Abundance of Difficulty  
 " and Pains, till after he has fully  
 " satiated his Appetite. Thus we see  
 " the great *Ajax*, surrounded by all the  
 " *Trojans*, and their Allies, that press'd  
 " him on all Sides, showering up-  
 " on him Multitudes of Darts, with  
 " much ado yield to their Violence."

*Homer*



upon HOMER'S Iliad. 499

*Homer* goes yet farther, and spoils his Application, by representing *Ajax* throwing Fear and Terror among all his Enemies, by stopping their Ranks and Squadrons; which is what the Asses don't do. But thus far his Comparison is extremely just, and without Fault or Blemish, tho' it were intolerable in a modern Poet. Mr. D. has very judiciously mark'd this Difference in the following Words, which Madam D. produces, (*Vol. 2. p. 513.*)

" In *Homer's* Time Asses were not contemptible, as they are now; their Name was not yet converted into a Term of Reproach and Injury, and they made a Part of the Equipage of the greatest Kings and Princes. *Homer* might very well then, without any Breach of Decorum, compare *Ajax* to this Animal, especially when it is only to represent his Obstinacy, Strength and Patience." Thus far I agree entirely with Mr. D. but as to what he adds, that we can't ridicule this Comparison without being guilty of Impiety, because God put it into the Mouth of *Jacob*, when he bless'd his Children, I refer the Reader to the last Chapter of the third Part of this Work. Notwithstanding all these Authorities, Madam D. says (*514.*) she durst not

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use the proper Name in her Translation, and that therefore she was forc'd to have recourse to Paraphrase: "For, *says she*,  
 " we ought always to accommodate our  
 " selves, especially as to Style and Ex-  
 " pression, to the Notions and Customs  
 " of the Age we live in, even when we  
 " condemn them." She was in the  
 right to accommodate her self to the Cu-  
 stoms of her own Age, but very much  
 in the wrong to condemn them in this  
 Particular; for Asses being in our Age  
 so despicable as they are, without any  
 Fault of ours, 'tis as commendable in  
 us to exclude them from Heroic Poe-  
 try, as it was in *Homer* to introduce  
 them, writing in a Country where  
 they were in Reputation. Madam D.  
 therefore mistakes the Design of her  
 Husband's Reasoning, when she adds to  
 the Reflection just cited, that we shou'd  
 be often deceiv'd, if in judging of a Com-  
 parison, we shou'd examine whether the  
 Subject whence 'tis borrow'd is great and  
 noble; for, according to Mr. D. in the O-  
 riental Nations, the Ass was esteem'd a  
 very noble Animal; and if it hadn't been  
 so, *Homer* would never have made use of  
 it, by Md. D.'s own Acknowledgment and  
 Testimony, since she assures us, that the  
 Comparisons that he addresses even to  
 those

upon HOMER's Iliad. 501

those of mean and vulgar Capacities, are drawn from sensible Objects, but which are always grave and noble.

To represent the old Men of *Troy*, to whom Age (B. 3. p. 107.) had granted a great Fluency of Speech and Elocution, deliberating upon the Top of a Tower, about Ways and Means to put an End to the Misfortunes under which they laboured, *Homer* compares them to Grasshoppers destitute of Flesh and Blood, and that sung upon the Tops of Trees, as those Ancients deliberated upon the Top of a Tower. According to Madam D.'s own Explication, (i. 391.) this Comparison indeed makes those ancient Persons very ridiculous, as they well deserv'd to be, for Reasoning so long about a Difficulty so easy to be resolv'd, since they needed only restore *Helen* to the *Greeks*. Madam D. endeavours to avoid this Ridicule, by saying that we cannot accuse *Homer* of falling into a low Comparison, since Grasshoppers were in such Esteem in *Greece* in ancient Times, that the *Athenians* wore Golden Grasshoppers in their Hair, to shew that they were not Foreigners. Grasshoppers indeed don't raise too low an Idea in Pastoral Poetry; and with Reference to them, I shall deter-



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mine nothing with respect to the Epic: But I say that this Custom of the *Athenians* decides nothing as to the Nobleness of the Comparison; for the *French Ladies* put upon their Faces an Ornament of artificial Flies, as the Fly itself boasts in a Fable of *la Fontaine*, but this don't render it therefore the more noble.

Nevertheless, *Homer* shews a particular Inclination to this Insect; he first makes a Comparison thereof in B. 16. (p. 41.) to express the Action of two Armies assembled about the Body of *Patroclus*, the one to carry it off, and the other to prevent their doing it: But in B. 17. (p. 93.) he says, "That *Minerva* fill'd *Menelaus* with Strength, and inspir'd him with the Spirit and Boldness of a Fly: which clinging to a Man, suffers no Repulse; but tho' continually driven away, still returns to its Charge, till it is fully satiated with the Blood after which it thirsted: Such is the Boldness with which the Goddess inspires *Menelaus*, who first descends and covers the Body of *Patroclus*, and then darts his Javelin against the Enemy." This Comparison, to be just, should rather have been applied to the *Trojans* that  
clung

upon HOMER's Iliad. 503

clung to the Body, and not to *Menelaus* who defended it; or rather, he should not have employ'd it in two Books successively, and upon the same Subject.

The Fly, in my Opinion, is yet more improperly introduc'd in the 4th B. The Poet there makes an Apostrophe to *Menelaus*, against whom *Pandarus* had just let fly an Arrow, and says to him, (p. 131.) "*Minerva* took care to prevent its Effect, by turning it aside with the same Care as a Mother full of Affection and Tenderness, who seeing her Infant in a calm and deep Sleep, drives away from him an obstinate and troublesome Fly, for fear it shou'd awake him with its Sting: She conducted the Dart to the Place where the Golden Clasps that fasten'd the Belt were joined, and made it as it were a double Cuirass: The terrible Dart pierc'd these Clasps and the Cuirass, and its Force not being wholly spent, it pierc'd also the thin Plate that was underneath, which yet farther weaken'd the Stroke, so that the Arrow, near spent, enter'd but a little Way in the Flesh; immediately the Blood flow'd from the Wound." I own I cannot reconcile or join together the instantaneous Motion with which a Dart

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is parry'd or put aside, with the Care and Assiduity necessary to drive away a Fly that resolv'd to fix upon any particular Part : But besides, in my Opinion, *Minerva* was not very cunning, to suffer *Menelaus* to be wounded, tho' in no vital Part; and a Mother that should let a Child's Hand be stung by a Wasp to save its Face, would appear to me but very careless. This Place therefore stood in great need to be set off by an Encomium, which Madam D. accordingly gives it, (1. 414.) " This Comparison, " *says she*, appears to me perfectly " charming, both upon Account of its " Justness, and the Sweetness of the " Image it presents. The Dart that " flies thirsty for Blood, is compar'd to " a Fly; *Menelaus*, who entirely trusting " in the Promise that was made him, " and who was, as it were, asleep in " Peace and Innocence, is compar'd to " an Infant in a calm and deep Sleep; " and *Minerva*, because of the constant " and assiduous Care she takes of *Mene-* " *laus*, is compar'd to a Mother that " drives away a Fly from her Child for " fear of its wakening him by a Prick " from its Sting; and as this Mother " contents her self with driving away " the Fly from the uncover'd Parts, and " permits



upon HOMER's Iliad. 505

“ permits it to rove about upon his Lin-  
“ nen and Vestment, and wheresoever it  
“ can do no harm, so *Minerva* is content-  
“ ed with removing the Arrow from the  
“ mortal Part, and lets it light upon  
“ that Part of the Body which is the  
“ most covered and sound.

I shall say nothing of the Fear *Achilles* (B. 19.) discovers to his Mother, of the Flies fixing themselves upon the large and gaping Wounds of the Body of *Patroclus*, and ingendering therein Corruption. All this appears hideous to us, with respect to *Patroclus*' Corps. But the great Respect we pay to the dead Bodies, which we now bury much sooner, very much prevents that natural Horror they would otherwise create in us. I here only again consider of the Flies, which this very Passage makes us look upon as a vile and odious Insect, and consequently very unworthy of being employ'd in the Comparisons of an Epic Poem. The Fly, in Physicks, or natural Philosophy, is looked upon as a busy troublesome Animal, that is nourished by Corruption, and carries it about with him : In Morality, it has always been the Symbol of Emptiness and Vanity. The mythological Authors or Writers of Fables, that were  
Poets,

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Poets, have enobled the Fly by their Expressions ; as Madam D. observes, (3. 451.) “ It is in them a laudable Elegance, for the lower or middle kind “ of Poetry, which they have chose” But this therefore won’t give it Admittance into the Heroic. If Monsieur *de la Fontaine* has called it the Daughter of the Air, as Madam D. observes in the same Place, ’tis a Proof that our Language has a very happy Manner of expressing even the most trivial Things, notwithstanding all the unjust Reproaches Madam D. gives it upon this Subject: But this does not make the Fly worthy to be compared to Heroes. We may affirm, on this Occasion, that our present Taste, as to what is great and noble, or low and mean, is more haughty and delicate than our Hearing, altho’ the Ear was esteemed by the Ancients the nicest of all the Organs of Sense ; amongst whom it was a Saying, *Fastidiosissima sunt Aures* ; and it is commonly much better founded ; for, upon due Inquiry, we shall almost always find the Cause of our Distaste ; as here, that which renders the Fly disagreeable to us, does us Honour as to our Taste, it having its Source in the Idleness and impertinent Noise this Insect makes. And indeed this Distaste  
ceases

upon HOMER's Iliad. 507

ceases as to the Bees, whose very Name with us adorns all our different Sorts of Poetry. *Homer*, who observes neither Justness nor Decorum, hath incurr'd the Criticism and Correction even of *Madam D.* herself, by making use in the 16th B. (p. 18.) of Wasps instead of Bees, "There are Wasps in the Text," says she, (3. 418.) but I have put Bees, "because this Image is more agreeable in our Language, and seems to me more proper for disciplined Troops." We admit also of Ants or Pismires, which make a yet less Show than Flies, because they are Emblems of Vigilance and Industry: *Madam D.* is therefore deceiv'd in her Judgment of Taste, when she says, (3. 451.) "That a Hero may as well be compared to a Fly, as a wise Man to a Pismire." However this is, if we are offended at the Comparison of a Fly, we herein only resemble the *Athenians*, that wonderful People, so famous for their Wit, and who exceeded us so much in Learning and Knowledge, in *Mr. D's* Judgment and Opinion, as appears from many Passages and Testimonies in his Writings to this Purpose. In his Remarks upon *Plato*, he tells us, (Vol. 2. p. 51.) That when *Socrates* said that his Comparison of the Fly would be esteem-

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ed ridiculous, 'twas only to turn to Ridicule the too great Niceness and Delicacy of the *Athenians*, since this Comparison is made use of by the Prophet *Jeremiah*. We are therefore much more reasonable than the *Athenians*; for we freely admit the Term and Comparison of a Fly in moral Discourses, such as those of *Socrates*, and those of the Prophet *Jeremiah*; yea, we even admit their Encomium and Panegyrick. In Discourses of Wit, such as that of *Lucian*, which Madam D. thinks serious, (3. 451.) and which we refer to the Collection of Panegyricks *Dornavius* has made, viz. that of the Spider, Beetle, Quartan Fever, Famine, Drunkenness, Folly, and other such like; all which he has collected together in one Volume.

Lastly, *Homer* himself had a very low and mean Idea of a Fly, since he makes its Name a Term of Reproach; which, according to the Testimony of Mr. D. produced above, upon the Subject of the Ass, shews the Baseness of the Term.

καὶ ὀνειδίζον φάτο μῦθον  
 ἥπτ' αὖ, ὃ κυνόμυια θεοῦς ἐρεδι ξυελκύει  
 φ. 394.

*Et*



upon HOMER's Iliad. 509

*Et probrosum dixit verbum;  
Cur rursus, ò canina musca, Deos prælio  
committis ?*

It is *Mars* that addresses his Discourse to *Minerva*, and gives her this injurious Language: "Why, you Bitch of a Fly, do you sow Discord and Dissension among the Gods?" About twenty Verses after, *Juno* makes use of the same Term, speaking of *Venus*, (*ibid.* 421.) *Και δ' αὖθ' ἡ κυνόμυια ἄγχι βροτολοιγὸν Ἄρνα.* *En rursus illa canina musca ducit perniciosum Martem.* Besides, I cannot think the Beauty of the *Greek* Term, upon which *Madam D.* lays so much Strefs, of much Effect here; for, after all, the *French* Word *chienne*, or the *English* Word *Bitch*, appears to me as fine as the *Greek* Word *κύων*, *Mouche*, or *Fly*, as *μύια* and *chienne de muche*, or *Bitch of a Fly*, as *κυνόμυια*: And yet *Madam D.* has not thought it proper to propose such Expressions in *French* to Men of polite Taste. As for *Homer*, he does not stick at characterising the Discourses of his Deities, by the injurious Expressions of the most vile and brutal Populace, who commonly bestow the Compliment of Dog or Bitch upon every one that disoblige

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liges them, or with whom they have a mind to quarrel; but was it ever before joined in a more disagreeable Manner, than by joining it to a *Fly*, *A Bitch of a Fly*, or a *Fly of a Bitch*? I expect that Madam D. should inform what is Low-ness, Baseness, or Infamy of Expression, if this is not an Example of it.

We shall finish the Article of base and low Comparisons, and this whole Chapter, with that of the Tanner, or Dresser of Hides. "As when a Tanner, says *Hermer*, B. 17. (p. 82.) gives to robust  
"and strong Men the Hide of a vast  
"Bull, to stretch it, after having soak'd  
"it in Oil, each take a Side, and by  
"the Strength of their Arms, extend-  
"ing it to its utmost Stretch, cause that  
"Humidity and Moisture to go out,  
"which yields and gives way to the Oil  
"that penetrates it; in the same Man-  
"ner the two Armies, in a very narrow  
"Compass of Ground, use their utmost  
"Efforts and Endeavours to seize the  
"Body of *Patroclus*, and carry it off." The Comparison is not only odious but false, because it suggests as if they had torn *Patroclus*' Intrails out of his Body, which was not so; yet is he sure of Ma-  
dam D's. Praise. "A more exalted Com-  
"parison, says *she*, (3. 446.) would not  
"so

*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 511

“ so well have expressed the Action  
“ which *Homer* would here describe, of  
“ many Warriors disputing for a dead  
“ Body, each striving to carry it off.  
“ The Ancients have very much com-  
“ mended the Clearness and Energy of  
“ this Image. If it does not now ap-  
“ pear to us so fine as it really is, *adds*  
“ *Madam D.* it is partly the Fault of our  
“ Taste and Judgment, which has much  
“ ado to condescend to what is simple  
“ and natural; and partly also from the  
“ Deficiency of our Language, which  
“ having only low and mean Terms to  
“ express those Images borrow'd from  
“ Arts, is not able to raise and exalt  
“ them by a noble Stile.”. As to our  
Taste, *Madam D.* not having apply'd  
herself to the Study of the natural Sci-  
ences, and therefore not having acqui-  
red that Philosophical and Geometrical  
Taste that extends it self to every Thing,  
and which is alone in Esteem, she nei-  
ther knows the Taste of our Age, and  
yet less shares therein. And for what is  
it she accuses our Taste, for not relish-  
ing what is only simple and natural? If  
we should divide the whole learned  
World between those who admire *Homer*  
and those that don't, the most noble, and  
even the most numerous Part, in her O-  
pinion,



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pinion, viz. that of his Admirers, no doubt extremely prize and value *Homer's* gross and natural Simplicity; and for the others, a small and inconsiderable Number, who are so weak as to be shock'd at most of his Images, it is principally because they are out of Nature. Are not we continually reproached, that neither our Imagination nor Language can sufficiently raise themselves to the Sublime of *Homer's* Poetry? Is it not upon account of our great Regard to Nature, that we condemn the false Allegories and chimerical Ideas of this Poet, the unnatural and forced Interpretations of his Poem, and the injurious Praises of his Commentators? Is it not the same Taste that makes us reject what is absurd and unreasonable, in the astonishing and miraculous Parts of Poetry, and require that even Fictions themselves should take Nature for their Model and Foundation? Upon a thorough Examination and due Discussion of Things, it will be found at last, that the main Thing we could not approve of in *Homer*, will terminate in the Indignities he has offered his Deities, the Scurrilities he puts in the Mouths of his Heroes, and the low Taste and want of due Politeness in his Comparisons.

As

## *upon* HOMER's Iliad. 513

As for Madam D.'s second Reason, which is taken from the bad Effects of the Terms, which in our Language express natural and simple Things, we shall answer it in the following Chapter; upon which I enter with great Impatience, to vindicate our Language from the unjust Reproaches *Homer* has occasion'd to be thrown upon it.

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### CHAP. VI.

#### *Of Homer's Composition and Stile.*

MY Design here is not to dispute the Advantages of the *Greek* Language; on the contrary, I shall observe one, of which perhaps I am more sensible than any of our warmest Antagonists; 'tis the Facility and peculiar Grace of this Language in the Composition of its Words, which renders it singularly proper for the Use of Sciences that are gradually advancing by new Discoveries. This is so true and certain, that in all natural Sciences we still borrow from the *Greek* the Names of a Multitude of Inventions, which the

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Greeks

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*Greeks* were ignorant of; as, *Logarithms*, *Telescope*, *Barometer*, and such like: without mentioning those Sciences which they had not; as, *Loxodromy*, *Pyrotechny*, and the modern *Analyses*, or *Algebra*; we even borrow their simple Words, as in *Chymistry*, according to some, and in *Acousticks*, or the Doctrine of Sounds, &c.

The *Greek* Language has another Property, which is its Harmony; but this Property, tho' undoubtedly very advantageous to the Language, has been very pernicious to the Minds of the *Greeks*: They have given themselves up so entirely to the Sound of their Words, and the Cadence and Harmony of their Phrases, that most of their Authors, even such as have wrote in Prose, whether Historians or Philosophers, have hardly given the least Attention to the Solidity of the Thoughts, or the Verity of the Facts. The *Romans* themselves have often severely reproach'd them for both; 'twere easy to prove that they esteem'd *Greece* as the Mother and Source of Lying and Sophistry; and if this were a proper Place to treat of this Subject, a Collection of Testimonies from *Roman* Authors against the *Greeks*, on this Head, wou'd prove more considerable,



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siderable, both as to their Greatness and Authority, than we are readily aware of; but, without producing them here, *Plato* himself owns, that the *Athenians* were more curious of Words than Things, (*de Leg. B. 1.*) and *Mr. D.* subscribes to the Accusation, when in his Notes upon the *Eutyphron* of *Plato*, he says (*p. 472.*) that *Socrates* reproaches the *Athenians* for loving fine and beautiful Harangues, and having no Regard to the Verity of Facts. It is very melancholly that *Mr. D.* shou'd perpetually prefer Men of this Character to us.

*Madam D* her self shews us a sensible Example of the Weakness of the *Greeks* with Respect to the Harmony of Stile, when she expresses her self thus in her Preface to *Homer*, (*p. 30.*) "It is in  
"vain to urge here, that 'tis an Error  
"to set off to the best Advantage  
"Thoughts and Things, by the Choice,  
"Sound, and Harmony of Words;  
"for, without entering into that Dis-  
"pute, it is sufficient that the Prac-  
"tice is so, and that Harmony pro-  
"duces this Effect upon all Men: No-  
"ble, sublime, and harmonious Words  
"and Expression, where the Cadence of  
"each Period is sweet, and all the Epi-

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“ thets well adapted, will always have  
 “ more Power and Influence upon the  
 “ Minds and Passions of Men, than the  
 “ most reasonable Things express’d  
 “ harshly and in a disagreeable Manner.  
 “ The Ear is the finest, the most nice  
 “ and delicate, and proudest of all the  
 “ Senses; and it is That we should  
 “ chiefly endeavour to engage to our  
 “ Interest, if we would rule and subdue  
 “ the Mind.” And instancing on this  
 Occasion the Poetry of *Lucretius*, tho’  
 only a *Roman* Author: “ If we take to  
 “ Pieces, *says she*, the Verses of the  
 “ Poet, and plainly express what he  
 “ delivers concerning the Nature of the  
 “ Soul, and the Manner in which Vi-  
 “ sion is performed, there is scarce any  
 “ one cou’d have Patience to hear him;  
 “ his Principles wou’d then appear ab-  
 “ surd and contrary to Truth: But if  
 “ we repeat the Verses of this great  
 “ Poet, there is no Ear can resist the  
 “ Charms of their Harmony, or be  
 “ Proof against its soft and bewitching,  
 “ but strong and powerful Insinuations;  
 “ and whenever the Ear is thus charm’d,  
 “ it soon surprizes and imposes upon  
 “ Reason.” It had been a great Advan-  
 tage to Authors and Readers liable to  
 such Deceptions, that Words were but a  
 pure

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pure Sign, or, as it were, an aerial Body and Vehicle for Thoughts, so as they might appear naked and transparent under this thin Veil, such as they were in themselves: Then all false Reasonings, and consequently false Beauties, would never have come into such Esteem and Request, especially among the *Greeks*; and those great Masters wou'd not have been expos'd to the Ignominy and Shame, which some of them have incur'd by Translations, when stripp'd of the Harmony and Sound of their Language, we have seen their naked Thoughts. And it has happen'd to them, what at this Time happens to some of our own Orators, who having succeeded in Declamation, have thereupon had the Vanity to think their Compositions fit for the Press, and worthy publick View, which quickly discover'd all their Weakness and Emptiness. But we judge of the one and the other after a very different Manner; for with respect to our Orators who have lost their Reputation by appearing in Print, we condemn and despise their Compositions and Speeches, and laugh at those who were induc'd merely by external Gesture and Sound to pass a false Judgment upon their



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Performances: On the contrary, with respect to the ancient Authors that have lost their Reputation by being translated into our Language, we lay all the Blame upon the Deficiency of our Language, and its being so far inferior in Strength and Beauty to that of the *Greek*, and then appeal to their Contemporaries as infallible Judges. Yet the *Greek* Authors of true intrinsic Merit have lost nothing by the *French* Translations; I say this not only of the Historians whom the Truth of Facts support, but even of their Authors of Raillery, Wit and Satire, such as *Lucian*. If it shou'd be replied to this last Instance, that the Translator has render'd *Lucian* as agreeable and harmonious as in the Original; this Answer wou'd restore the Advantage to our Language, of which we don't yet treat: But besides, the greatest Harmony of our Language will never make that pass for true that is false, nor for good that is bad.

Besides this, we must not think that the *Greeks* were exempt from all Prejudice or Partiality as to their Language: As Cadence, Numbers and Harmony of Stile, tho' of some Effect in general, is yet arbitrary and very doubtful in many Cases, or particular Examples,

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ples, the *Greeks* have often thought fit to find in some of their Authors a Cadence and Harmony they wou'd not have found in others that shou'd have had the Boldness to write as the first. Suppose, for Example, a *Greek*, whose Character was not yet establish'd, who aspir'd to the Praise of writing eloquently and harmoniously : and I ask, if any wou'd have advis'd him to write a large Volume of Dialogues upon very abstract Subjects, or whose Composition and Turn render'd abstract even the most trite and familiar Subject ; enjoining him especially, that his Dialogues being reduc'd as much as possible into the same Form, should be almost wholly composed of indefatigable and endless Interrogations on the Part of the principal Speaker, and of simple Answers of *Yea* and *Nay* on the Part of all the rest ; permitting him only to vary his *Yea's* and *Nay's* by synonymous Terms and Expressions ; as, *certainly, without doubt, even so ; not at all, by no means, nothing less* : And yet this is the true Character of the Hero of *Greek* Cadence and Harmony in Prose. Now tho' the *Greek* Tongue belongs indeed to the Native *Greeks*, and they are its natural Judges, and we *French* or *English* Men, whether impli-

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cit Admirers, or Reasoners and Philo-  
 sophers, know but little or nothing of  
 its true Harmony, since we even dis-  
 pute about its very Pronunciation ; yet  
 I have some Reason to believe the Stile  
 of *Plato* wou'd have ruin'd the Reputa-  
 tion of any other Author. *Lucian* was  
 of the same Opinion, when in his dou-  
 ble Accusation, speaking of Dialogue in  
 the Manner which *Plato* has treated it,  
 he says, with Reference to Stile, that  
 Dialogue was a melancholly Skeleton,  
 which caus'd Horror by its frequent Di-  
 gressions and want of Connexion ; and  
 with Respect to the Subject, he makes  
 the Dialogue it self thus argue : " Have  
 " I not Reason to complain of *Lucian*,  
 " who, grave and serious as I was,  
 " treating only of God and the first  
 " Principles, has dress'd me in a ridi-  
 " culous Manner, and made me de-  
 " scend from the Stile of *Plato* to that  
 " of *Aristophanes* ?" *Lucian* answers,  
 " That Dialogue is enraged, because he  
 " no longer flies up into the Heavens,  
 " nor informs us how much pure and  
 " celestial Substance God mixes with  
 " terrestrial Matter ; he is only curi-  
 " ous about what he don't understand ;  
 " he don't know what passes here up-  
 " on Earth, and yet wou'd speak of  
 " Things



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“ Things that are above in Heaven.”  
I here, with a small Variation, use Mr. *D'Ablancourt's* Translation, which will be found faithful and just, if we consult the *Greek* and its Commentaries. In short, the genuine *Socrates*, that of *Xenophon*, for Instance, or that of *Diogenes Laertius*, made Philosophy to descend from Heaven to Earth; that of *Plato*, on the contrary, had made it ascend from the Earth to Heaven. Notwithstanding which, I yet own, that there appears some certain Fragments of particular Discourses, where *Plato* has wrote with much Politeness and Eloquence; but even here he has suffer'd the Harmony of Stile so far to impose upon him, that provided the affirmative Phrase is as musical and melodious as the negative, one might think he sometimes takes the one for the other; and this After-Sophistry is one of the principal Causes of the frequent Inconsistencies and Contradictions of this Author.

With Respect to *Homer*, I shall content my self with a few Remarks of Fact upon his Versification; with which I begin: And first, I say, that tho' the latter Poets have always preserved the same Degree of Esteem for his Versification; yet they were perswaded that,  
for

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for their own particular Use and Advantage, they ought to compose more correctly ; for indeed, all those Negligences and Omissions which the Grammarians have given us, as the general Practice of the *Greek* Poets, I mean the arbitrary Elisions, the short Syllables us'd for long ones, the Want of a *Cæsura* ; and, what is yet worse, those Words, but above all, those Epithets of four Syllables that are only inserted to make up the Verse, and that still spoil its Ending and Termination ; all this was blamable, because much rarer in the following Ages. This Progress of Improvement and Correction is even perceivable in *Hesiod*. The best Criticks of the greatest Sagacity and Penetration, such as *Salmasius* and *Mr. Kuster*, give us as a Proof of *Homer's* greater Antiquity than *Hesiod*, that the Style of the latter is more agreeable and perfect, more correct, better adorn'd, softer and smoother : *Longè suavior Hesiodus, & comptior, eoque minus antiquitatis redolens*, says *Salmasius*. \* *Comptior enim Hesiodus & rotundior*, says *Mr. Kuster*. † But a stronger Proof of *Homer's* greater Antiquity

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\* *Plinian. exercit.* p. 867.

† *Hist. Crit. Hom.* p. 11.

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tiquity than *Hesiod's*, for my Purpose, is, that tho' *Homer* had much more Genius than *Hesiod*, yet *Hesiod's* Morals are better and sounder, and his Thoughts more regular; the natural Effect of the Growth and Improvement of the human Mind, in a Course and Series of Time: 'Tis also certain that *Hesiod's* Verses are less licentious and irregular than those of *Homer*, and that such as are blemish'd with this Inadvertency, occur less frequent than in *Homer*. We have nothing left us of the Poets who wrote in *Hexameter* Verse, from *Hesiod* to the Reign of *Ptolomy Philadelphus*, which was the happy and memorable *Epocha* for Learning. Under him flourished divers Poets; and among others, *Callimachus*, to whom I shall at present confine my self, and the more willingly, because he has chosen grave and serious Subjects: It is particularly in this last that the *Greek* Numbers and Versification appear more exact; we see even towards the End of his second Hymn, that he prescribed himself a Law to examine and criticise his Verse, and render it more correct. And indeed it seems to me as if *Callimachus* had given his Poetry very near the same Cadence and Harmony as the *Romans* did, who afterwards attained to Perfection in this Way,  
and



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and that there is the same Difference between his Verses and those of *Homer*, with Respect to their Turn and Manner, as between those of *Ovid*, for Example, and those of *Lucretius*.

I comprehend under this Correction, the Rejection, or at least the Diminution of this Privilege, for which Mr. D. (*Poet. p. 353.*) boasts of the *Greek Language*, viz. The Prolongation, the Abbreviation, and Change of Words. "The different Dialects, says Mr. D. (*p. 352.*) which were properly the Customs of the different Countries of Greece, gave the *Greeks* this Liberty of using all those different Ways of speaking and writing." The ancient Poets, term'd *Trovadeurs*, in *France*, did the very same Thing with the Jargon of their Time (*Rech. de Pasquier, i. c. Pasquin's Inquiries, B. 7. c. 4.*) therefore all this ought only to pass for the Variation and Uncertainties of a Language still in its Infancy, and not yet fully fix'd. The *Greek* seems more fix'd in the bright and flourishing Age of the *Athenian Republic*, when the Poets, such as *Sophocles* and *Euripides*, very seldom us'd this pretended Privilege: Therefore, when Mr. D. affirms that these different Dialects were allow'd not only the Poets,  
but

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but also the Orators, Historians, and Philosophers, he somewhat perverts and abuses the Credit his Learning gives him, and does not seem to suspect that his Readers will satisfy themselves, that *Herodotus* confined himself to the *Ionick* Dialect, *Thucydides*, *Demosthenes* and *Plato* to the *Attick*; and lastly, that all Authors more modern than those, such as *Polybius*, *Diodorus*, and *Dionysius Harlicarnassens*, used only the common Dialect.

With respect to the Poets, we find in no other beside *Homer* this perpetual Medley and Mixture of Dialects. 'Tis true, that long after him *Theocritus*, who was near Cotemporary with *Callimachus*, chose the *Dorick* Dialect: But besides that, he wholly confines himself to this, Particular, at least in the same Treatise: In a sort of Advertisement, intituled Γένεσις Θεοκρίτου, which I believe is not to be found intire but in the Edition of this Poet, by *Aldus Manutius*, in 1495. We see that *Theocritus* chose and used the modern *Dorick*, softer than the ancient, which was harsh, obscure and bombast, κέχρηται... Δερίδιτῃ νέα δύο γὰρ εἰσὶ, παλαιά τραχέα τις ἐστὶν, καὶ ὑπερογκος, καὶ οὐκ εὐνόητος ἢ δέ νεα μαλθακώτερα, which shows, that in the Judgment of the anonymous

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nymous *Greek* Author of this Advertisement, that the *Greek* Tongue had in length of Time improved in its Softness and Sweetness, and consequently in Numbers and Harmony; In a Word, if we pursue the different Ages of the *Greek* Language, we should observe the same Progress as in the *Latin* Tongue and our own; *i. e.* that in proportion as all those Languages were enrich'd with proper Terms, fine Expressions, and happy Turns, they rejected all those Liberties and Licentiousness; which is very opposite to Mr. *D.*'s Opinion; they even rejected them so far, as not to use them, upon the Account of Cadence and Harmony. It is in vain therefore that Madam *D.* alledges the Antiquity of the *Greek* Language, to which she assigns a thousand Years before the Age of *Homer*, as a Proof of the Perfection to which it was then arrived. The Language of the *Laplanders* is now perhaps of above four thousand Years standing, and is not yet therefore the more improved upon this Account: Indeed, a Language never improves among a savage and barbarous People, who make no other use of it but only to express the Necessities of the Animal Life. It does

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\* In her *Causes of the Corruption of Taste*. P. 244.  
not



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not begin, if I may so express it, as it were, to ferment and improve, or be cultivated, till the Minds of Men begin to have a Taste, and apply themselves to their Study; because 'tis then those who would reason in this Language, seek out new Terms and Expressions, but agreeable to the Notions and Ideas already received, and the Words in general Use among their Countrymen; and it is only from this *Æra* and *Epocha* we ought to date the Growth and Improvement of a Language. I shan't determine at what Distance *Homer* lived from this second Birth of the *Grecian* Language; it is sufficient to have prov'd that it visibly and sensibly improved after his Time. But I must acknowledge two Things; the first, which concerns the *Greek* Language in general, is, that in itself, and independent of those Authors which have cultivated and improved it, it is the happiest of all Languages; and the second, which regards *Homer* in particular, is, that as we have some ancient *French* Authors, who are very much superior for their Stile to others who are very modern. I very willingly agree that *Homer* has wrote much better than *Hesiod*, *Callimachus*, and all the other *Greek* Poets of all Ages, not with

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with Respect to the general Harmony of his Versification, but with Reference to the Genius of his Language, and even with Respect to the Cadence and Harmony of several particular Lines and Verses.

But the Nature and Manner of Style, or just and fine Writing, implies something more than all this ; and to ascend to first Principles of Things, I make the the whole Art and Mystery of good Writing to consist in Terms and Conditions equal in all Languages, and independent of every particular Idiom. I reduce those Terms or Conditions to three Heads : The first, is, To say all that is necessary ; the second, is, To say nothing superfluous ; and the third, To give the most proper Image of the Thing we would express, which can be found in that Language, in Conformity to that Style and Manner of Writing we have chose. This last Condition entirely depends upon the Elegance and Vivacity of the Imagination, and the Propriety and Justness of the Writer's Judgment ; superadding thereunto a general Knowledge of all Arts and Sciences, and all Customs and Practices, which may furnish happy Metaphors, but so natural ones as may pass only for Expressions.

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ons. Therefore whereas the Art of Writing, so far as it only imports the Exactness of Syntax, the Smoothness, or even the Cadence or Harmony of Periods, lies level to the Capacity of but indifferent Genius's, when pursued with Application: The Art of Writing, according to our Third Condition and Qualification, is only the Talent of the Greatest and most Sublime. But, as the Criticism which I could make of *Homer*, with Respect to this last Condition of Stile, would be subject to insuperable Difficulties, designing to say nothing but what is plain and evident, I proceed to the Second Condition, which consists in expressing nothing superfluous in the Discourse.

I touch here upon that Fault and Vice of *Homer*, which is the most obvious, and most generally own'd; and I might name Men famous for their Knowledge in the *Greek* Learning, both among the *Romans* and *French*, Admirers of Antiquity and *Homer* too, who yet find his Stile full of Tautologies and vain Repetitions; principally in those Epithets he applies so ill, and repeats so often, that they appear only as so many Botches or Forms of Discourse in his Verses: Such is the Sirname of

M m

*Lightfoot,*



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*Lightfoot*, which he gives to *Achilles* almost every where, and even when he gives his Advice in Council, as in the first B. (α. 58.) 'Tis thus also he prostitutes the Name of *Hero*, or *Great Captain*, to Persons, whom the Moment after he accuses of Cowardice. As to the two Sons of *Dares*, *Phegeus* and *Ideus*, (B. 5. p. 170.) the first having been kill'd by *Diomedes*, the second, viz. *Ideus* hadn't the Courage to save his Brother's Corps, but shamefully flies away. It is the same with *Pisander*, and the intrepid *Hyppolochus*, who being attack'd by *Agamemnon* in the 11th B. (p. 171.) prostrate themselves upon their Knees in their Chariot, and lifting up their Hands, (p. 172.) beg their Lives. 'Tis on this Occasion that *Madam D.* observes, (2. 503.) "That *Homer* never makes the *Greeks* guilty of such mean cowardly Actions, but only the *Trojans*;" as, for Example, the brave *Hyppolochus*.

There are some Passages where the honourable Epithet is so near the ignominious Action, that *Madam D.* her self was aware of it, and then she says that the Epithet is only given by way of Irony. "If you are the Sons of *Antimachus*," says *Agamemnon*, B. 11. (p. 172.)

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“ 172.) speaking to those brave and bold  
 “ Suppliants we have just mention'd, that  
 “ wise and valiant Hero, who, when Mene-  
 “ laus and the prudent Ulysses were sent  
 “ Deputies to Troy to make Proposals  
 “ of Peace, advised the Trojans to pre-  
 “ vent their returning to the Greek Ar-  
 “ my, and urg'd them to put them to  
 “ Death; you shall immediately suffer  
 “ the Punishment due to the Injustice  
 “ of your Father.” “ This Title of Wise  
 “ and Valiant Hero, says Madam D.  
 “ hereupon, (2. 503.) is an Irony; for  
 “ it was no Part of Wisdom to prevent  
 “ the Trojans restoring Helen, nor Cou-  
 “ rage to advise them to put to Death  
 “ the Ambassadors of the Greeks.” But  
 Madam D. forgets that Homer, charac-  
 terising Antimachus in the preceding  
 Page, when there was no Room for  
 any Irony, there terms him himself the  
 valiant Antimachus.

This is not the only Passage where  
 Madam D. by her private Authority,  
 turns into Irony, Epithets which were  
 very sincerely given by the Poet to Per-  
 sons, tho' very unworthy of them: As  
 when in B. 10. (p. 161.) Ulysses, giving  
 an Account of the nocturnal Exploits  
 he had just perform'd in Company with  
 Diomedes, says, “ That he had kill'd a

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“ Spy whom *Hector* and the *Trojans*,  
 “ who very well understood Persons  
 “ that were vers’d in the Crafts and  
 “ Stratagems of War, had sent into  
 “ the *Greek Camp*.” Whatever *Madam D.* and the Scholiasts, who both understand this Encomium ironical, may say, ’twas *Ulysses*’ Interest then to exalt and raise the Capacities and Abilities of the *Trojans* in Point of War, the better to set off his own Skill and that of *Dio-medes*. Has not *Madam D.* her self said in her Remarks upon this same B. (2. 488.) “ That *Homer*, to exalt the Prudence of *Hector* and his Capacity in the Arts of War, made him hold a Council during the Night, and to imagine the same Visit from the Enemy’s Camp, which *Nestor* had propos’d to the *Greeks*.” I know very well that this Skill and Capacity of *Hector* destroys the Imprudence and want of Conduct with which *Polydamus* had accus’d him, and the Reproach which *Madam D.* in general casts upon the *Trojans*, of knowing little of the Arts of War. But ’tis no Fault of mine, if the *Iliad* and *Madam D.*’s Remarks and Criticisms compose a perfect System of Inconsistencies and Contradictions. What surprizes me, is, that *Madam D.* having



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having this Key of Irony to explain *Homer's* Epithets that appear absurd when taken in their plain and obvious Sense, has not made use of it in a Passage of the 7th B. where *Priam* rejecting the Counsel of *Antenor*, who advis'd him to restore *Helen*, and embracing that of *Paris*, who was for detaining her, is said to be equal in Wisdom even to the Gods themselves, (B. 7. p. 24.) where instead of interpreting ironically this mad and extravagant Epithet, Madam D. very seriously tells us, (2. 405.) "That *Homer* wou'd hereby inform us, "that when Injustice is carry'd to a certain Height, all Wisdom vanishes and "disappears; or if it speaks, 'tis not "heard or listen'd to." Madam D. towards the Beginning of all her Remarks, (1. 352.) had said, that 'twas sufficient once to give a Reason for the Epithets *Homer* makes Use of. This indeed is sufficient, by saying once for all, that either the Necessity of filling up the Number of the Verse, or the Convenience and Advantage of the Sound and Phrase, carries it almost always above what he ought to say, or perhaps even above what he intended to say: But whoever would justify him, must find

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out some new Chimera and Fiction for every Epithet.

Yet it must be own'd, that most of *Homer's* Epithets have no other Fault but their Superfluity, or have no other Use but to fill up his Verse, or a little to raise Terms which in themselves would not suit the Epic Stile. 'Tis by this that Madam *D.* justifies the Comparison of Peas in the 13th B. by admiring (2. 564.) the Riches of the Epithets which *Homer* gives them; Pulse or Peas, attended by rich Epithets! But, for the same Reason, it is needless to seek, as Madam *D.* does so often, the natural, moral, or historical Reasons of *Homer's* Epithets. In the second B. for Example, he speaks of the warlike *Perabes*, who cultivated the Plains water'd by the delicious River *Titerefus*; a Moment after he himself takes Notice that the *Titerefus* was a Branch of the Waters of *Styx*; and *Strabo*, cited by Madam *D.* (1. 372.) adds, that this River at the Source was deadly Poyson; but, says Madam *D.* "*Homer* calls it delicious upon a religious Account, inasmuch as it was a Custom to swear by these Waters." But in the following Verses I find that the Waters of this River

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River were fine and pleasant, καλὶ ῥοδὸν ὕδωρ, (B. 752.) tho' Madam D. has not translated it; and therefore I don't know whether I must understand this Epithet in a religious Sense, or as implying a real Property, or only as a rich and luxuriant Epithet, which *Homer* gives to those black stinking Waters, or which at least were so thick, that, to use the Poet's Expression, they swam like Oil above the Waters of the River *Peneus*.

One is at a Loss, says Madam D. (3. 444.) to know why *Homer* has given the Epithet of Illustrious to the City *Panopes*, which wasn't nine hundred Paces in Circuit, where there was neither Palace nor Academy, Theatre, Market-Place, nor Fountains: It is because of the Dances which the *Athenian* Women perform'd and celebrated there at the Feast and Ceremonies of *Bacchus*, answers Madam D. citing *Pausanias*. This is a very learned Reason; but here's a more simple, and, I believe, a much truer One, that it is a great, rich and noble Epithet which *Homer* gives to a little Country Village.

In an Article of Enumeration, (B. 1. p. 85.) there is mention made of *Eumeli*, Son of *Admetus*, and of the di-



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vine *Alcestes*: "I am perswaded, says  
 " *Madam D. thereupon*, (I. 371.) that  
 " *Homer* gives the Epithet of Divine to  
 " *Alcestes*, because she so tenderly lov'd  
 " her Husband, as to die to save his  
 " Life." An Epithet not quite so  
 strong, for Example that of Generous,  
 wou'd have done more Honour to *Alcestes*,  
 because it would have better characteris'd  
 and distinguish'd her; for as for the  
 Epithet Godlike or Divine, it occurs in  
 every Page of the *Iliad*; in the third B.  
 especially, it is given to *Helen* no less  
 than three Times, even in *Madam D.*'s  
 own Translation, (p. 108, 110, 124.)  
 and thereupon I can't help saying, that  
*Homer* gave to *Helen* the Epithet Di-  
 vine, because she lov'd her Gallant so  
 tenderly and passionately, as to abandon  
 her Husband to follow him. *Madam*  
*D.* moralizes also upon a Discourse of  
*Sarpedon* in B. 12. "We are, says he,  
 " look'd upon as so many Deities."  
 " What is there more unjust, says she,  
 " than one to be honour'd as a Deity,  
 " when he even falls short of the mo-  
 " ral Virtues of a Man? He ought to  
 " be superior in Virtue, who wou'd in  
 " Dignity." This Moral were very just,  
 if *Homer* did not by a vicious Practice,  
 make every one that occur'd, a God, or  
 equal

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equal to the Gods, whenever the Epithet ἰσοθεός was necessary to fill up his Verse.

In fine, to shew that in the Criticism we make of *Homer's* Epithets, we only follow the Rules and Dictates of common Sense, Mr. D. himself speaks thus, (in his *Art of Poet.* 351.) "The Use we shou'd make of Epithets, is not without its Laws and Bounds: If a Poem abounds too much with Epithets, it is flat and cold; and if the Epithets are ill chose and disagreeable, it is nauseous and ridiculous, and the Poet is guilty of the same Fault with which *Aristotle* reproaches *Clitophon*, who wou'd floridly express and adorn the smallest and most trifling Circumstances, and who express'd himself every where as ridiculously, as if he had given to Figs the Epithet of Venerable." What is it then that Mr. D. would have us say of *Homer's* Epithets, which not only are vain and superfluous, but contrary to the Nature of the Things, and contradictory to the Design for which he introduces them?

The Superfluities and Redundancies of *Homer's* Composition and Stile, appear yet more in his Repetitions: He has

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has carry'd this Fault beyond all Bounds or Belief; for, in short, he has not only repeated the Discourses which his Persons send from one to another, or that they deliver to one another to be repeated immediately again upon the Spot, but even Discourses of Passion; and, what is still more surprising, he puts the same Discourses into the Mouths of divers Persons, whose Characters are different. We find the same Thing several Times repeated in the same Discourse; and he makes Heroes relate Facts, which he himself has already narrated as a Poet; Facts, which make up whole Episodes entirely foreign to his Subject: He repeats the same Fictions, and the same Facts and Events in several Places; he recalls the same Descriptions, the same Comparisons, and the same Pieces of Wit and Humour: Lastly, which is what more particularly concerns his Stile, he repeats his Words and Expressions. Most of his Phrases are usual and customary, and the same Sounds return perpetually to our Ears; he scarce ever speaks but in a set Form; and in a great Number of his Verses the first Word makes you know all the rest.

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The Repetition of the Discourses which his Persons send to be made to one another, is what is easiest to be justify'd; this shews in the Messenger a Fidelity and Simplicity that is of some Value: But first, there is a Rule which ought to obtain at all Times and in all Ages, *viz.* That this Repetition should be within the Bounds of Probability, *i. e.* That the Message or Speech should be short enough for a Man to be able to retain it Word for Word. By this Rule we may justify all the Discourses, how long soever, that are repeated by the Gods, who have an infinite Memory: But how could *Ulysses*, for Example, retain Word for Word that long Discourse which *Agamemnon* sends by him to *Achilles*, in the 9th B. ? Secondly, 'Twas very well done in After-Ages to vary the Discourse of the Envoy, and this not only with Respect to Men, but also with Reference to the Gods themselves; because such a Variety contributes much to make the Subject in Hand beautiful and agreeable. Nothing, for Example, is finer than the Variety of Expression which *Virgil* uses in the Messages and Orders which *Jupiter* sends by *Mercury* to *Aeneas*, in the 4th B. of the *Aeneids*. The Expressions of *Jupiter* are so fine, that they seem  
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inimitable ; and yet the Reader is charmed to see the same Things repeated by *Mercury* in new Terms and Expressions, which, if I may so say, are as difficult to be matched as the first.

Madam *D.* who gives true or false Rules in proportion as she thinks one or the other may prove favourable to *Homer*, speaks thus, (*Vol. 1. p. 332.*) “ I shall here satisfy my self with remarking, once for all, that *Homer* always makes his Messengers repeat their Dispatches or Speeches in the same Terms and Expressions in which they received them ; this is more decent and respectful. What Right has an Envoy or Ambassador to change any Thing of the Terms of his Message or Commission ? Is he more able, or greater than his Principal ? An Envoy or Ambassador ought always to deliver what he is ordered, just as he received it.” I admit of this Maxim with regard to the essential Part of the Commission, and I allow of it with reference to the Usage of the self same Terms in that Respect ; but I reject as false the following Part of Madam *D.*’s Remark, where she says, *An Envoy may add, but he ought not to forget any Thing.* Or rather, to be more exact,

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exact, I shall make a Distinction; an Envoy may add Explications and Invitations to the Words of his Commission; but let all the Politicians or Statesmen that Madam D. can name, decide between her and me, whether it is agreeable to the Character of a simple Envoy, employed to make Offers and Proposals of Terms to an Enemy, that he should, of his own Head, enlarge to the Terms of his Prince or General, especially before the Enemy has returned their first Answer? Yet this is what *Ideus* does in the 7th B. for *Priam* having order'd him to carry to the *Greeks* the Proposals of *Paris*, who promised to restore *Hellen*, and all the Riches he had brought from *Argos*, *Ideus* promises as from his General, all the Riches that *Paris* had brought to *Troy*. It is Madam D. herself who observes and takes Notice of this Difference, which perhaps otherwise we should not so much have minded or regarded. " This is not, *says she*, (2. p. 406.) " what *Paris* had said; for " *Paris* only promised to restore what " he had brought from *Argos*, hereby " excepting those he had brought from " *Sidon* and other Parts; but *Ideus*, to " make the Terms much greater, and " more inviting, makes a general Offer " of



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“ of all that he had brought to *Troy* ;  
 “ for he was fully persuaded that if the  
 “ *Greeks* accepted this Proposal, tho’  
 “ beyond his Commission, it would have  
 “ been performed.”

I call those dictated Discourses in the  
*Iliad*, which one Person makes to ano-  
 ther, to repeat them at the same Instant  
 and in the same Place : Of which here  
 is an Example literally translated ; it is  
 taken from the 4th B. where *Juno* speaks  
 to *Jupiter*, upon Occasion, and at the  
 Time of a Truce concluded between the  
*Greeks* and *Trojans*, i. e. at a Time when  
 they did not fight, who tells him in so  
 many Words : “ Command *Minerva* in-  
 “ stantly to repair to the furious Com-  
 “ bat between the *Greeks* and *Trojans* :  
 εσγρώων ἢ Ἀχαιῶν φύλοπον αἶνῃν. δ. 65.  
 To order it so, that the *Trojans* first at-  
 “ tack the *Greeks*, notwithstanding their  
 “ Oaths, she speaks thus : The Father  
 “ of Gods and Men let himself be per-  
 “ suaded, and immediately pronounce  
 “ these winged Words to *Minerva* : Go  
 “ quickly into the Army, in the Midst  
 “ of the *Greeks* and *Trojans*, and order  
 “ it so that the *Trojans* make the first  
 “ Onset, without regard to their Oaths,  
 “ and attack the proud *Greeks*.” Thus  
 runs *Homer*’s Text, when justly transla-  
 ted,

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ted, which in my Opinion includes nothing mean or low: But here follows the Translation of Madam D. which will beforehand demonstrate what I shall presently treat of more at large, *i. e.* the Art wherewith she adds, retrenches and changes Words, in order to render *Hom-mer* more tolerable to us. "Command  
" *Minerva* then immediately to repair  
" to the Army of the *Greeks* and *Tro-*  
" *jans*, and by all possible Means to en-  
" gage the *Trojans* to break the Treaty  
" they have sworn to, and become the  
" first Aggressors, by insulting the *Greeks*,  
" who are now too far swell'd and puff-  
" ed up with their Victory. The Fa-  
" ther of Gods and Men granted *Juno's*  
" Request, and instantly gave this Or-  
" der to *Minerva*: Go immediately to  
" the Army of the *Trojans*, and exert  
" all your Cunning and Power to engage  
" them, notwithstanding the Truce, to  
" insult and attack the *Greeks*, who are  
" grown too haughty and proud with  
" the Advantage they have lately ob-  
" tained."

It may be very justly observed that *Ho-mer* affects often to cause the same Thing be said twice: In the 24th B. for Exam-ple, *Priam*, without there being any Oc-casion for *Hecuba* to dictate it to him,  
might

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might of himself have formed the Prayer and Supplication he makes to *Jupiter*, before he went to find *Achilles*. But the great Art the Poet seems to value himself most upon, is when he can make the same Thing be repeated thrice; as in the Fiction which *Jupiter* dictates to the deceiving Dream which *Morpheus* relates to *Agamemnon*, and which *Agamemnon* repeats to the *Greeks*.

With reference to the same Things repeated in the same Discourse, I have elsewhere cited the Passage of *Priam*, which recalls twice to *Achilles* the Memory of his Father, in almost the same Terms. This Fault, if it is one, is but very inconsiderable. But I must here take Notice of a Remark of Madam D. upon a Passage of the 1st B. "*Agamemnon*, says she, (1. 288.) repeats several Times the same Thing, as it is usual with Persons in Passion; they never think they have said enough, but are always improving upon their first Thoughts." To this I answer, that if they do really improve upon their first Thoughts, it is neither a Fault nor a Repetition; but if they only repeat them, the Passion of the Person don't excuse the Poet: And besides that, Poetry does not admit of brutal Passions, such



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such as are often to be found in Men, but ever represents them as they are exerted in a beautiful and rational Manner; so, I say, besides that, the Description of any Passion whatsoever, shou'd never be so drawn, as to become tedious or nauseous to the Reader.

One of the most vicious Repetitions in *Homer*, is when he makes two Persons of different Characters repeat the same Discourse in different Parts of the Poem. Madam D. makes no Apology for this odd Sort of Repetition, but conceals it the most she can in her Translation, by altering the Terms of the repeated Discourse: And indeed, can any thing be more contrary not only to the Difference of Characters which are most of all conspicuous in Discourses, but to Probability, and even the Possibility of Things, than to suppose two Persons, who, without having agreed about any thing, or even so much as on this Occasion convers'd together, or understood one another, should yet say the same Thing precisely, and in the same Words? We see an Example of such Repetition in the 8th B. where *Minerva* speaks thus to *Jupiter*, (B. 8. p. 36.) " We are all  
" very sensible that your Power is in-  
" vincible, and that nothing can with-

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" stand

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“ stand you ; but we can’t help being  
 “ touch’d with Compassion at the Fate  
 “ of the *Greeks*, who, according to their  
 “ unhappy Destiny, perish in the Bat-  
 “ tle : We abstain from Fighting, be-  
 “ cause you have commanded us ; but  
 “ we can’t help inspiring the *Greeks* with  
 “ wholesome Councils, that so they  
 “ may not all perish by the fatal Fury  
 “ of your Indignation.” Now this  
 very Discourse is repeated entirely  
 throughout by *Juno* to *Jupiter* in the  
 same B. thirty Pages after (p. 64.) and  
 we may be assur’d that in the *Greek* it  
 is related exactly in the same Terms :  
 (l. 32. and 463.) In the 22d B. *Jupi-*  
*ter* being moved with Pity for *Hector*,  
 would save him ; *Minerva* tells him,  
 (p. 262.) “ If you would yet endeavour  
 “ to snatch from the Jaws of Death,  
 “ a Man who was long ago deliver’d up  
 “ to his Fate and Destiny, and whose  
 “ fatal Moment is now come, you may ;  
 “ but the other Deities will never give  
 “ their Consent.” *Juno* had before said  
 to *Jupiter* the same Thing, and in the  
 same *Greek* Terms, upon Occasion of  
*Sarpedon*, in B. 16. (p. 29.) and it does  
 not appear that *Minerva* had been there  
 to learn *Juno*’s Words by Heart.

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We have in the first B. a remarkable Example of those Facts which *Homer* causes his Persons to relate, after having narrated them himself before in the Course of his Poem. *Thetis* hearing the Complaints which *Achilles* made upon the Seashore, comes to her Son to enquire the Reason of them: *Achilles* makes to her a Narration of twenty two Verses long in the Original, which repeats to the Reader, not what he had seen a long Time ago, and which he might have forgot by the Distance of many Books, but what he had just before seen, a Fact that he had immediately before related; in a Word, all that had pass'd from the Beginning of the *Iliad* to the carrying off *Briseis*, which was the Subject of the Tears of *Achilles*. Perhaps, you'll say, it was essential to the Sequel of the Poem, that *Achilles* should first inform a Person of this Fact, who could not otherwise know it, and this were only a trifling Fault in the Intrigue and Plot. Not at all; *Thetis* knew perfectly well before, all that *Achilles* here relates; and he says to her in the Beginning, (B. 1. p. 24.) "You know it; what need I repeat Things that are already known to you?" We are very well acquainted with the Regard our Poets always pay to three Rules, in the



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Narrations they cause their Persons to make: The first is, that only those Things be related which the Hearer was as yet ignorant of; the second is, that such Narrations be related only to those Persons that cannot learn it elsewhere; and the third, which is the nicest and finest of all, is, that this Narration shou'dn't have already been made in Conversation among the Persons themselves. *Homer* does not here transgress against this last Rule, as in the 9th B. where *Phœnix* gives to *Achilles* the whole Detail of his Life, to which *Achilles* shou'd have answer'd, \* *Millies jam audivi*, You have told me of it a thousand Times before: But he transgresses against the two first, by introducing *Achilles* making a long Relation of a Thing, the Reader already knew, to his Mother, who knew it also: "And this, says *Madam D. upon this Passage*, "is the true Model we ought to follow." (I. 311.)

*Homer* repeats also Episodical Facts, the Repetition whereof is so much the more ridiculous, as they were impertinent to his Subject even the first Time he introduc'd them. They deafen *Dio-*

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\* *Gnatho in the Eunuch.*

upon HOMER's *Iliad*. 549.

*medes* with the brave Actions and Exploits his Father *Tydeus* had done at *Thebes*, whom they unjustly prefer before him. *Agamemnon* opposes them to him in the 4th B. and *Minerva* in the 5th B. It is the same with the Combat between *Achilles* and *Aeneas* upon Mount *Ida*, related by *Aeneas* himself in the 21st B. (p. 182) and mention'd in the Way of Reproach by *Achilles* to *Aeneas*, with all its Circumstances, five or six Pages after, (p. 188.)

The Repetition of the same Fictions and Events in the *Iliad*, makes the whole Texture of the Poem, which represents nothing almost throughout but Battles and Combats, almost the same, or very near resembling one another, whether of Gods or Men. It is principally in this Respect we may justly say, that if we were to throw out of the *Iliad*, besides the Things that are repeated Word for Word, those which have a very near Resemblance, we should reduce it to a fourth Part. But in this general Repetition, there is one Article that seems to me more remarkable than all the rest. In the 3d B. (p. 101.) *Paris* makes an Offer to engage in single Combat with *Menelaus*, on Condition that the Success of this Duel should finish the War be-

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tween the two Nations. *Hector* goes in Person to carry this Proposal to the *Greeks*; who, without any Regard to the Character of the *Trojan* Hero that speaks to them, answer him with as much Rudeness as Injustice, that all the Children of *Priam* being impious and perfidious Persons, (p. 104) *Priam* must come himself, and seal the Treaty by a solemn Sacrifice: All this is perform'd with the most watchful and serious Precaution. *Paris*, when ready to yield, is withdrawn by *Venus* from his Conqueror *Menelaus*; the Truce nevertheless subsists, till *Pandarus*, unworthily tempted by *Minerva*, aims a Dart at *Menelaus*, which breaks the Alliance they had just before sworn to: Yet, notwithstanding all this, *Hector* in the 7th B. has the Assurance to come and offer a new Proposal of single Combat to the *Greeks*; and the *Greeks*, without reproaching him for what had happen'd after the first Combat, think themselves obliged to accept of the second; which was like the other, at least in this, that the *Trojan* Champion was again overcome.

We find in the *Iliad* very long Descriptions exactly repeated; such is that of *Minerva*, who quits her Vail to take her



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her Arms, in the 5th B. (p. 223, 224.) and who passes thro' the Gates of Heaven, which were committed to the Custody of the Hours. This Description is indeed very noble and very poetical; but when we find it again in the 8th B. (p. 59.) with very little Difference in the *French*, and none at all in the *Greek*, we are not only shock'd at this second Repetition, but it would seem as if it sunk the Value of the first.

We have sufficiently spoke elsewhere of *Homer's* Comparisons, and particularly of the Resemblance they bear with one another: But besides this, they sometimes return in an exact Repetition; as that of a Lion that wou'd enter a Park, and is driven thence by a Company of Shepherds arm'd with Darts and Torches; the same is again us'd in the 11th B. upon Occasion of *Ajax*, who in vain attempts to break through a Battalion of the *Trojans*; and in the 17th B. upon Occasion of *Menelaus*, who is loath to quit the Body of *Patroclus*; and in both those Places it returns exactly the same, without the least Variation or Difference, (λ. 548. p. 658.) His Persons also shew sometimes a particular Inclination and Affection to the same

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Comparison: Thus *Thetis* in the 18th B. speaking of *Achilles* to her Nymphs, says, (p. 110.) That he grew as a young Olive; and that after having carefully brought him up as a Plant, which is nourished and cultivated in the best Place of a rich Soil, she had sent him to *Illion*; and twenty Pages after (p. 135.) she repeats to *Vulcan*, upon Occasion of the same *Achilles*, and in the same Greek Terms, her Olive, her Plant, and her rich Soil.

It is well known of what extreme Delicacy and Nicery all Pretences to Jestings and Wit ought to be, to gain the Favour and Esteem of the Reader; the least Affectation makes them lose all their Effect, and immediately changes them into flat and insipid Raillery. *Homer* often repeats his in the dullest Manner; and among others, this which he puts into the Mouth of *Merion*, when attacking *Aeneas*, in the 16th B. (p. 40.) “*Pluto*  
“ and I are going to make a fine Divi-  
“ sion; he shall have your Soul, and I  
“ the Glory of sending it down to his  
“ Dominions.” Madam *D.* herself takes Notice, (3. 427.) that *Homer* had before made use of the same Raillery; and indeed, *Ulysses* had used it in the 11th B. against *Socus*; and *Sarpedon* in the 5th B.

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B. against *Tlepolemus*; that it should not be said that *Homer* omitted any sort of Repetition that the humane Mind could imagine.

But what shall we say of those Words and Phrases that return perpetually in *Homer*: As the *τον δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος*, to which *Martial* makes an ironical Allusion, in one of his Epigrams; insinuating, that it would cost him little or no Pains to compose vast Volumes, if it were allowed him to repeat his Words and Phrases as *Homer* does.

*Edita ne brevibus pereat mihi charta libellis,*

*Dicatur potius τον δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος.*

We need only read four Books in *Homer*, to know all his different Ways of speaking and expressing himself; he has always the same Transition from his Facts to his Discourses, and from his Discourses to his Facts. But I have here more particularly in my Eye and View his set Forms; I mean certain Phrases ready made, which *Homer* makes use of in many Places, where they produce very different Effects. In the 3d B. (p. 99.) *Paris* withdrew, frightened at the Sight of *Menelaus*; and *Hector* says



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says to him, very pertinently, "Unhappy *Paris*, who hast nothing to boast of but Beauty, and who art possessed of no other Passion but the Love of Women, perfidious Deceiver!" For thus I render, Δυσπαρι, εἰς τοῦ ἀριστε γυναιμαρὲς, ἡπεροπεντα, by Terms which I think more faithful for a Translation, and better for the Sense than those of Madam D. who says, (B. 3. p. 99.) *Unhappy Paris, who hast but a deceitful Aspect and Appearance, and art only valiant among the Ladies.* But at the End of the 13th B. the same *Hector*, (p. 302.) meets the same *Paris* encouraging his Companions, and obliging them to fight with Resolution, and thereupon he repeats to him exactly the same injurious Verses of B. 3. because *Homer* would not give himself the Trouble of making another for the second Occasion, how different soever it was from the first.

What surprises me yet more, is to find other Forms, which are really absurd the first Time *Homer* uses them, nor are at all pertinently introduced but at the second or third Repetition. Here is an Example. In a Council of the *Trojans*, in the 7th B. wise *Antenor* (p. 23.) proposes the natural and judicious Advice of restoring *Hellen* to the *Greeks*. *Paris*,

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to the Scandal and Contempt of human Reason, makes this Reply: "*Antenor*,  
" says he, (p. 24.) the Advice you give  
" is no ways agreeable to me, and you  
" are no doubt capable of giving a bet-  
" ter: But if you think what you say,  
" the angry Gods must have deprived  
" you of all Judgment." Now this  
Answer was made for a Passage in the  
12th B. where *Hector*, (p. 236.) propos-  
es it very properly to *Polydamus*, who  
advised him shamefully to shut himself  
up in *Troy*.

In the 1st B. (p. 13) *Agamemnon*, an-  
swering *Achilles*, who was valuing him-  
self upon his Services, tells him: " Of  
" all the Kings, you are the most odious  
" to me; for you breathe nothing but  
" Quarrels, Wars and Devastations."  
Could any Thing have been of greater  
Use and Advantage to *Agamemnon*, in  
his Attempt upon *Troy*, than a Man that  
delighted in nothing more than Wars  
and Battles? This Reproach is but a  
Form, which is more proper in a Passage  
where *Jupiter* makes use of it against  
*Mars*, in the 5th B. (p. 234.) though to  
say the Truth, it has but a bad Effect  
in the Mouth of a Deity, who besides  
had already elsewhere entertained and  
feasted himself with the tragical and  
bloody

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bloody Spectacle of so many Thousands of Men killing and destroying one another, (B. 11. p. 168.) This Form therefore is not well placed neither in the first Circumstance, nor in the last.

In a Passage of the 16th B. (p. 32.) *Sarpedon* being mortally wounded by *Patroclus* very far from the Ships, calls *Glaucus* to his Assistance, and tells him, as the Text is literally translated by Madam D. in her Remarks, (3. 425.) "What Shame wou'd it be for you, if "the *Greeks* shou'd strip me of my "Arms in the Midst of our Ships!" The Commentators, as Madam D. herself relates, have said thereupon, that *Sarpedon* was delirious, or light-headed, being at the Point of Death; while upon other Passages, as upon Occasion of *Patroclus*' prophesying when a dying, at the End of the same B. (p. 53.) they say, as Madam D. also relates it (3. 432.) that the Soul, in the Moment that the Laws of the Union of the Soul and Body are breaking and dissolving, sees what is future, and beholds it in the Deity. Thus, *Homer* has no other Reason to make *Sarpedon* say, that he dy'd in the Midst of the Ships, tho' he was far from them, but as it is Verse ready made, a Form before us'd in the



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15th B. upon Occasion of *Caletor*, who was indeed kill'd in the Midst of the Ships, *νεων ἐν ἀνῶνι πεσόντα. ο. 428.* But tho' Absurdity did not always accompany Repetition in most of those Forms, yet nothing has so bad an Effect in Stile as frequent Repetitions, and common and vulgar Expressions; it is by this we certainly distinguish Persons of a low Genius and narrow Education, from Persons of Merit and Fashion; and this Habit in a Writer is as vicious, as it wou'd be in a Painter.

To conclude the Article of Repetitions with some general Reflections: The Author of *Telemachus* says somewhere, "That the Words of *Mentor* were attended with a wonderful Life and Influence, because he was never guilty of Repetitions." This Sentence appears to me exquisite; and I always thought that Repetitions extinguish'd all the Life and Vivacity of a Discourse, by that Negligence which accompanies them, and which bewraying in the Orator or Poet, either too great an Esteem for his own Expressions, or a Contempt for his Reader's Taste, deprive him of all his Influence and Authority. 'Tis upon this Principle I oppose a Reason which

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which Mr. and Madam D. make Use of in their Preface to the Meditations of *Marcus Antoninus*, to excuse certain Repetitions which this great Emperor, who wrote only for his own private Use, has left in his moral Reflections. “ Strange “ Injustice and Partiality of Men, say “ Mr. and Madam D. to fall into the “ same Faults, and yet not to be able to “ endure the Repetition of the same “ Censures and Reproof!” To this I answer, That the Vices of Men never justify bad Writing; and that if a prophane Author is capable of reforming his Readers, he’ll much sooner succeed therein, who takes Care not only of the Matter, but, of the Manner and Stile of his Composition, than he who is guilty of dull and flat Repetition, or other gross Faults of Discourse. But, lastly, Mr. and Madam D. both agree in the same Preface, that those Repetitions, which in their Opinion are not vicious in a Treatise of Morality, are yet so in a Treatise of Wit. This is sufficient to vindicate and bear us out in this Article against *Homer*. But we have fuller and more exprefs Testimonies against him upon this Head; that of *Father Rapine*. for Example: “ *Homer’s* “ true Character, says this modern Critick,

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“*rick*, \* is his Tedioufnefs and Prolixity in relating Things and Circumstances ; he is the greateft Talker of all Antiquity ; and the *Greeks* themselves, how great Talkers foever they were, have reprov'd *Homer* for this Superfluity of Words and Intemperance of Discourse, as a great Fault in him : He is guilty not only of repeating the same Words, but also the same Things ; and indeed, of perpetual Repetitions.” ‘Tis true, he talk’d always naturally, but he talk’d too much ; and we mustn’t forget the Testimony of Father *Bossu*, of much greater Weight with Madam *D.* and more express in his Assertion. “ We tire the Reader, *says he*, B. 3. Ch. 16. when we relate to him what he was before appriz’d of: This was not judg’d so bad in *Homer*’s Time. *Virgil* is more exact herein ; *Venus* in the first Book permits not *Aeneas* to give the Relation of his Misfortunes, but interrupts him to comfort him ; and in the third, when good Manners and Decorum engaged this same Hero to relate his History to *Andromache*,

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\* Comparison of Homer and Virgil.



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“ *Hellenus* very seasonably arrives, which  
 “ prevents him.” But every thing ought  
 to yield to Madam *D.*’s Testimonies, in  
 Favour of her own *Homer*. Yet, to over-  
 throw the Character and Reputation of  
 this Poet, we need go no farther than the  
 Preface and Remarks of Madam *D.* which  
 are an inexhaustible Magazine of all the  
 Objections that can be made against  
 him : For Example, upon a Passage of  
 the 5th B. Madam *D.* says, (1. p. 481.)  
 “ *Agamemnon* has already told this Hi-  
 “ story in the preceding B. which is  
 “ the Reason that *Homer* touches it but  
 “ by the by, because he supposes his  
 “ Reader to remember it.” Upon another  
 Passage in the 11th B. she says likewise,  
 (p. 523.) “ *Ulysses* has already related at  
 “ length the Orders which King *Peleus*  
 “ gave his Son ; this is the Reason  
 “ why *Nestor* gives only here the Sub-  
 “ stance of it, which he comprizes in  
 “ a single Verse.” Is it here, as in the  
 Repetition of 22 Verses in the 1st B.  
 that *Homer* is the true Model we ought  
 to follow ? Lastly, in a Remark upon  
 the 20th B. she says, (p. 111.) “ *Achil-*  
 “ *les* relates here a little more at length  
 “ the History, of which *Æneas* had be-  
 “ fore given a small Intimation : *Homer*  
 “ contrives his Narrations so well, that  
 “ he

upon HOMER's Iliad. 561

“ he never falls into any Repetitions.”  
How can we reconcile this Encomium,  
I don't say with what is obvious and  
conspicuous to the Eyes of every Rea-  
der throughout the Course of the *Iliad*,  
but with Madam D.'s own Words, upon  
Occasion of *Achilles'* Harangue to *Thetis*.  
(I. p. 131.) “ *Homer* hereby shews,  
“ *says she*, that a Poet or Orator is  
“ not to be censur'd for repeating  
“ the same Things in the same Terms;  
“ and that these Repetitions, which now  
“ appear tedious to Minds too nice and  
“ delicate, or rather too fluctuating and  
“ restless, are very reasonable; for no-  
“ thing is more ridiculous than to  
“ change without any Occasion or Ne-  
“ cessity, what has been once well ex-  
“ press'd.” Madam D. by Privilege de-  
riv'd from *Homer*, repeats again af-  
ter her self, in a Remark upon the 8th  
B. excepting that not following her  
own Advice, she alters her Terms.  
“ *Homer*, *says she*, Vol. 2. (p. 426.) here  
“ repeats ten or twelve Verses that he  
“ has used elsewhere, which is often  
“ done by him. This Poet, as *Eusta-*  
“ *thius* has very well observed, wou'd  
“ hereby shew us, that when we have  
“ once found out what is proper and  
“ just, we ought not to seek for any

O o

“ thing

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“ thing else, nor industriously avoid  
 “ such Repetitions. We have at pre-  
 “ sent, with Reference to this Nice-  
 “ ness and Delicacy which appears to  
 “ me, rather a Disease, than a Mark of  
 “ any sound Judgment and Taste; for  
 “ a good Taste will always admit with  
 “ Pleasure two or three Times the same  
 “ Image, when justly and happily ex-  
 “ press’d, tho’ in the same Terms.” We  
 admit of the same Images not only two  
 or three Times, but a hundred Times,  
 when we revise a fine Composition, or  
 often peruse a good Book. We also allow  
 of Repetitions in the same Work, when  
 they are profitable and useful: To  
 shew, for Example, the Application of  
 the same Principle to different Conse-  
 quences; but the least Repetition shocks  
 us, when it is a Mark of Barrenness or  
 Negligence in an Author; in a Word,  
 when it is a Fault; and is this so dan-  
 gerous a Disease? Further, ’twas impos-  
 sible for Madam D. perpetually to de-  
 fend the Vice of Repetitions; the natu-  
 ral Justness of her Understanding oblig’d  
 her often to return to the Truth: Thus,  
 for one Place where she authorizes Repe-  
 titions, we always find two or three  
 where she condemns them by praising  
 the contrary. ’Tis true, that this Com-  
 mendation,



upon HOMER's Iliad. 563

mendation, as applied to *Homer*, is very unjust; but with Reference to the Thing it self, it is an indeliberate Homage which Madam D.'s prejudicated Notions pays to *Homer*. And indeed, every Author that shall oppose evident Truths, such as is the Maxim that forbids Tautologies and Repetitions, must necessarily contradict himself; because the clear and manifest Truths that he resists, will certainly escape him in some Places, without his considering or attending to it in several others. He that contradicts Reason, Nature, and inward Sensation, always contradicts himself. And indeed, pure and implicit Admirers give themselves up so much to blind and dull Reasoning, that if they did not contradict themselves, we shou'd not tell where to attack them.

It is nothing new, to reproach *Homer* for his Superfluities; but as no one yet has reprov'd him for his Omissions, it will perhaps be surprising to find this second Vice of Stile, as conspicuous and abounding in the *Iliad*, as the former. *Homer*, for Example, joins to his Facts certain Circumstances that were never before us'd, which he neither explains, nor gives a Reason for: Such is that incomprehensible Wound which

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*Diomedes* gives *Pandarus*, (B. 5. p. 190.)  
 “ He flung his Javelin, which the God-  
 “ des *Minerva* conducted between the  
 “ Eye and the Nose of *Pandarus*; the  
 “ Stroke went into his Mouth, broke  
 “ his Teeth, and cut his Tongue; and  
 “ the Steel Point came out under the  
 “ Chin, near the Neck.” “ It is here  
 “ demanded, says *Madam D.* (1. 452.)  
 “ how *Diomedes*, who was on Foot,  
 “ cou’d give such a Stroke as *Ho-*  
 “ *mer* here describes? for it appears im-  
 “ possible. To this I answer, first,  
 “ that *Homer* says that *Minerva* con-  
 “ ducted the Javelin; and in the se-  
 “ cond Place, without having Recourse  
 “ to a Miracle, the Stroke might have  
 “ been given while *Pandarus* stoop’d; or  
 “ besides, a Man on Foot being able to  
 “ take the Advantage of the Ground,  
 “ *Diomedes* might have been rais’d up-  
 “ on some Eminence, which being so,  
 “ *Pandarus* in his Chariot might never-  
 “ theless have been below him.” In-  
 deed we can do no other but allow of  
 such Interpretations, tho’ the Poet him-  
 self shou’d give them. In the 21st B.  
 (p. 211.) *Lycaon*, *Priam*’s Son, causes a  
 Wild Fig-Tree to be cut down to make  
 the Wheels of his Chariot. *Madam D.*  
 hereupon very well remarks, (3. 530.)  
 that

upon HOMER's Iliad. 565

that a Wild Fig-Tree is not at all proper to make the Wheels of a Chariot ;  
“ But in all Likelihood, *says she*, the  
“ *Trojans* were reduced to this Necessity, because the Enemies, during so  
“ long a War, had cut down the best  
“ Wood for themselves.” Wou'd a modern Poet Now-a-days, that was careful and jealous of his Reputation in the Knowledge of Arts, rely upon the Hope of such an Explication ? But what is most pleasant, is, that after the following Leaf, (p. 532.) Madam D. says, that *Homer* gives a Reason for every Thing, and establishes a Probability every where throughout.

There are other Places in *Homer* where, for want of explaining himself, he falls at least into a seeming Contradiction : The Poet in the 15th B. (p. 367.) describes the Destruction of the Wall of the *Grecians* by *Apollo*. “ This  
“ God, *says he*, broke down the Rampart with as much Ease, as a Child  
“ plying upon the Sea-shore, scatters with his Hands and Feet the little Edifice of Stones he took so much  
“ Care and Pleasure in erecting. Thus  
“ you broke down and destroy'd, Divine *Apollo*, that Wall which cost so  
“ much Pains and Labour ; and you



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“ finish’d the Undertaking, putting the  
 “ *Grecians* to Flight.” This Facility is en-  
 tirely contradictory to the Labour and  
 Fatigue which *Jupiter*, *Neptune*, and *A-*  
*pollo*, are said to have undergone in de-  
 demolishing this Wall, by a Deluge  
 and Conflux of eight or ten Rivers,  
 (B. 12. 223.) which *Apollo* alone de-  
 stroy’d before by a Kick. But besides  
 this, in the following Book, (B. 16. p. 33.)  
*Glaucus* was not able to assist *Sarpedon*,  
 because he was wounded by an Arrow  
 which *Teucer* let fly at him, from the  
 Top of the Wall that was demolished  
 in the 15th B. yet as we may answer,  
 this Arrow was not sent before the  
 Wall was destroy’d; altho’ there is no  
 Reason to believe that *Glaucus*, who was  
 wounded, and felt such quick and lively  
 Pains, remain’d after that Time upon  
 the Field of Battle. I shall insist upon  
 another Passage of the same B. 16. where  
 it is said, (p. 26.) that *Patroclus* stood  
 between the Vessels, the *Simois*, and the  
 Wall. It can’t be answer’d, that the  
 Wall is here taken for the Ground upon  
 which it is built; for the Poet himself  
 here gives it the Epithet, *high*, *υψηλοῖο*,  
 π. 397. which would have been not only  
 false all along, but very ridiculous, if  
 he was speaking of a Wall actually de-  
 molished.

upon HOMER's Iliad. 567

molished. Patroclus places himself between the Ships, the Simois, and the High Wall; that is to say, the Wall which was no longer standing. Thus also Madam D. provides another Answer: "The Wall of the Grecians, says she, (3. 422.) tho' demolished in many Places, subsisted nevertheless in others." This I acknowledge; but it must also be allow'd, that if the Reproach of Contradiction is destroy'd, that of Omission still subsists.

*Homer* sometimes gives a Reason for the extraordinary Circumstances he relates; but he does not think fit to do this till a long while after we are shocked. We have elsewhere remarked an Example of this Delay, in the Assistance which *Apollo* gives to *Hector*, which is not mentioned till the 264th Page of the 22d B. upon Occasion of that wonderful swift Course he was seen to make round the Walls of Troy. In p. 265. it is likewise the same of the Care that *Venus* takes of *Hector's* Body in the 23d B. (p. 298.) by pouring over it a precious and divine Balm, to prevent its being torn in Pieces by dragging it about. But in the 22d B. (p. 275.) that is to say, 23 Pages before, it has been dragg'd full drive behind *Achilles's* Cha-

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riot, from the Walls of *Troy* to the Vessels. We see likewise in *p. 287.* that *Achilles* had dragg'd it round *Patroclus'* Tent, and upon the Sea-shore, and had offer'd it many other Abuses and Injuries, (*p. 288.*) In fine, as *Madam D.* very judiciously remarks, (*3. 573.*) these Facts which are imagin'd by the Poet, have arriv'd much oftener than the Poet says. Thus *Hector's* Body must have been torn in a hundred Pieces before the Preservative of *Venus* was applied.

But I wou'd much sooner forgive a Poet's relating Facts with improper Circumstances, than expressing just and proper Sentiments falsely and imperfectly: *Homer* will yet furnish us in this last Point with remarkable Examples of Omission. In the 7th B. (*p. 28.*) "during  
" a Truce, the *Greeks* and *Trojans* mix  
" together in the Field of Battle, carry  
" away their Dead . . . . each bearing  
" away his own Friends and Relations  
" upon Chariots, shedding Torrents of  
" Tears; but King *Priam* forbid his  
" Troops to weep." Was there ever any thing more fantastical or unjust, than this Advice, especially on *Priam's* Side, who made such outrageous Lamentations at the Death of his own Son? *Homer* shou'd have given us a Reason for this Advice;



upon HOMER's Iliad. 569

Advice ; but he leaves this Enquiry to Madam D. who tells us, (2. 407.)

“ That *Priam* forbid his Troops to  
“ weep, for fear of melting them too  
“ much, which on the Morrow wou'd  
“ occasion their having less Courage  
“ to fight.” If this is so, *Agamemnon*  
ought to have observ'd the same Thing  
with Respect to the *Grecians* ; and this  
wou'd have been a cunning Precaution,  
to attribute by this Means more Ho-  
nour to them than the *Trojans*, who  
were not so skilful in the Art of War.

In the 21st B. (p. 245.) *Agenor* en-  
couraging himself to fight *Achilles*, says,  
“ The great Exploits that render him  
“ so famous, are at the Bottom but Fa-  
“ vours which *Jupiter* his Protector be-  
“ stows upon him.” In twenty Places  
of the *Iliad*, and particularly in the 8th  
B. the Heroes justify their Fear and  
Flight, by this Consideration, that *Ju-  
piter* protects their Adversaries ; and  
*Agenor* here makes Use of it to encour-  
age himself. Madam D. immediately  
finds an Answer to this Difficulty : “ *A-  
genor*, say she, (3. 542.) would say,  
“ that since these great Exploits of *A-  
chilles* proceed only from *Jupiter*, *Ju-  
piter* may also fortify him, and give  
“ him Strength necessary to conquer *A-  
chilles* ;

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“*chilles*; for *Jupiter* favours whom he “pleases.” *Agenor* has indeed Reason to rely upon the fantastical Capriciousness of *Jupiter*; and I see we ought thus to take his Thought: But why does not he clearly express it? and whence proceeds it that *Homer* does not give to his Discourses the Extent necessary to banish that Air of Disagreement and Contradiction they seem to carry with them.

Madam *D.* sometimes in her Translation raises Surprizes which she dissipates in her Remarks. In the Beginning of the 21st B. (p. 209.) *Juno* covers the *Trojans* with a thick Cloud, to conceal them from *Achilles*, who pursu’d them; for thus she translates *ερύκευεν*, φ. 7. This is difficult to be comprehended; for *Juno*, who was favourable to *Achilles*, and an Enemy to the *Trojans*, ought, on the contrary, to have stopp’d them in their Flight, to deliver them up to the Sword of *Achilles*. This is the Sense which I, in my own Particular, and several other Interpreters, have found in the Passage; but Madam *D.* opposes this, and to exercise the Talent of Interpretation, which she enjoys in so high a Degree, she says, (3. 528.) “*Juno*, to “prevent *Achilles*’ pursuing this half of  
“the

*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 571

“ the Enemy's Army that fled to the  
“ City, covers them with a thick Cloud;  
“ for this Hero wou'd have bent his  
“ Course that Way, to endeavour to  
“ enter *Troy* with those that fled. As  
“ the Destinies had refus'd him this  
“ Glory, *Juno* suffers him not to lose  
“ his Time there, but by this Means  
“ obliges him to pursue the other half  
“ that fled to the River.” If this were  
the Intention of the Poet, the more subtle it is, the more he was obliged to explain it; for, after all, an Author that understands Composition, never inserts any Action contrary to the general Conduct of Men, or the particular Character of a Person, without expressing the Reason of it: By expressing it, one discovers a beautiful Stroke of Nature; and by not expressing it, one presents an Absurdity; and it is even by the Expression of such Reasons, that a Poet fills his Work with Matter of delightful Observation. *Homer*, to whom *Madam D.* always applies this Encomium, ever neglects giving Light to such Passages; not having taken Care that the Motives upon which his Persons act, are preferable in Poetry to the Body of their Actions, he seems to have given over these Motives to his Commentators, as a Painter  
gives



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gives over to his Disciples the Ornaments of a Picture, the principal Part of which he thinks he has already finish'd. And the Remarks of Madam D. are full of Thoughts and Designs that ought to have been originally in the Text.

I place in the Rank of *Homer's* Omisions, his want of Enumeration, or exact Distribution, in those Cases where the one or other is necessary ; or, in short, the little Care he takes of introducing into his Phrase all that the Mind requires, to remain fully satisfy'd of the Thing in which it is concern'd. The *Iliad* would furnish a great Number of these Examples ; I shall alledge only two ; the first of which is inconsiderable in itself, but very proper to justify my Accusation. In the Beginning of the 4th B. (p. 128.) the Poet says ; “ The Son  
“ of *Saturn* having a Mind to exasperate  
“ *Juno*, tells her with a bitter Raillery :  
“ There are two Goddesses which are  
“ favourable to *Menelaus* ; *Juno*, who is  
“ honour'd at *Argos* ; and *Minerva*,  
“ to whom the *Bæotians* pay so particular a Veneration at *Alalcomenes* ; but  
“ these two great Goddesses divert themselves with seeing the Battle at a Distance.” I think the Poet ought rather  
to

upon HOMER's Iliad. 573

to have said, *The Son of Saturn having a Mind to exasperate Juno and Minerva*, since he rally'd them both alike, and that they both fretted with Grief and Rage, (p. 380.) The second Example is more important, and I have before quoted it in another View. In the 4th B. (p. 334.) "*Minerva descends from the Summit of Olympus, with a Rapidity equal to that of a Star, which Jupiter sends as a fatal Omen to Fleets at Sea, or to Armies upon Land, which descending from the Top of the Celestial Roof into the middle Region of the Air; and which after having run through an immense Space, divides itself into a thousand splendid Fires: Thus the Goddess darted to Earth in the Midst of the two Armies; upon Sight of her, the Greeks and Trojans are struck with Wonder and Amaze, saying to one another; We shall either shortly see cruel Wars and bloody Combats, or else great Jupiter, who draws from his Treasures Peace or War as he pleases, is going to unite two People in Love and Concord.*" Madam D. perceived that the Reader might regard this Star which promis'd either Peace

or

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or War, as a ridiculous Omen ; for it would have been the same Thing if it had appear'd : Wherefore she says, (p. 410.) " this Passage ought to be explain'd ;  
 " for how can this Star or Exhalation,  
 " presage two Things so contrary as  
 " Peace and War ? for both these Omens  
 " ought to have their Foundations : By  
 " its Fires, it may be a Sign of War ;  
 " and by its Extinction, when it fell  
 " into the gross Air, it may be taken  
 " for a Sign of Peace." If this was the Idea of *Homer*, he ought to have divided the Description of his Phænomena into two well-distinguish'd Members, to apply to both after one another, the two Prognosticks which the People successively infer. This Exactness is the only Source of that Justness of Thought and Expression, which can render an Author agreeable to just Minds. But I know also that this is not to be requir'd from so simple and ignorant an Age as that in which *Homer* liv'd ; and to say more, it was never perfectly known by the *Grecians*.

*Virgil* and *Racine* have carry'd this Justness to its highest Point. Nothing is more curious than the Parallel which *Julius Scaliger* has made (*Poet.* 5. c. 3.)  
 between



upon HOMER's Iliad. 575

between the Passages of *Homer* and *Virgil* upon the like Subjects ; and the Sun in its Meridian is not more clear than the Superiority of the Passages in *Virgil*, above those in *Homer*. The true Fault of *Scaliger* in this Matter, upon which Authors far inferior to him have treated him so injuriously, is his having attributed to the ancient *Musæus* a Poem made perhaps near the Time of the Emperor *Justinian*. Mr. *Despreaux*, who calling old *Scaliger* a Man of great Learning, but at the same Time proud and insolent, says, \* That God has permitted him to fall upon this Subject into very gross Mistakes, is himself here guilty of a very great Error, which was much more easy for him to have avoided ; for he says, that *Scaliger* only spoke of *Homer* in a contemptible Manner, in a Book, entitled, *Hypercritique*, by its Author, who thereby owns, that he went beyond and exceeded all the Bounds of common and sober Criticism. Now there is no mention made of *Homer* in the *Hypercritique* of *Scaliger*, which is his 6th B. where he only speaks of the *Latin* Poets. His Judgment upon *Homer* is in the preceding Book entitled

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\* Conclusion of *Reflect. upon Longinus*.

only

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only *Critical*. Nevertheless, after all, such Inadvertencies are very excusable in the most learned Men, and especially in Mr. *Despreaux*, who was a better Poet than Scholar. But an Error of greater Consequence, for which I can't excuse him, is his having said, that *Julius Scaliger*, by this Mistake, had drawn upon himself the Laughter and Ridicule of all Men of Letters, not excepting his own Son. Mr. *Despreaux*, who imagined that the Debate or Controversy about *Homer* ought to be treated only by Invectives and Injuries, and who has given this bad Example to Madam *D.* might have been capable perhaps of publicly exposing his own Father, upon a Question of this Nature ; but *Joseph Scaliger* was not, and he differs from the Sentiment of his Father, but in Words full of Modesty and Decorum: *Neque in hoc sequimur optimi parentis nostri iudicium*, says he, (*Ep. 247. to Salmas.*)

As to *Racine*, he has no where particularly imitated *Homer* but in his *Iphigenia*. The Principal is in the 6th Scene of the 4th Act, where *Achilles* and *Agamemnon* dispute together about the Sacrifice of *Iphigenia*, which had just before been commanded : It is imitated from the first B. of the *Iliad*, where the  
same

*upon* HOMER's *Iliad*. 577

same Persons speak injuriously to one another upon Occasion of *Briseis*: I have here subjoin'd the Original, translated into as proper and correct a Stile as that of Madam D. but where I neither swell nor embellish *Homer*; in a Word, I have endeavour'd to affect that faithful Simplicity which the most learned Translators of Holy Writ have thought necessary to preserve its Dignity in all Languages. We shall now see how *Homer* will be found: *It is Achilles that speaks*. " I am not come here  
" to fight, because the *Trojans* have done  
" me any Injury; they never carry'd  
" off my Oxen, nor my Horses, nei-  
" ther have they ever done any Harm  
" to the Fruits of my Land in the fer-  
" tile and populous *Phtya*: There is a  
" vast Tract of woody Mountains, and  
" a rough and boisterous Sea betwixt  
" them and us: But we have follow'd  
" you, an impudent Man, that you might  
" glut your self with the Vengeance we  
" are drawing upon the *Trojans* for *Me-  
" nelaus* and you; we, for whom you  
" have no Regard or Esteem, are doing  
" this for you, you Dog, you; and you  
" threaten to deprive me of a Present  
" which the *Greeks* have given me, and

P p

" for



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“ for which I have undergone so many  
 “ Toils and Hardships. When the  
 “ *Greeks* destroy’d the rich Cities of the  
 “ *Trojans*, my Presents were never equal  
 “ to yours, tho’ your Arm was never  
 “ equal to mine in the Battle: I was  
 “ put off, and return’d to my Vessels  
 “ with something of very small Moment,  
 “ with a mere Trifle, after the great  
 “ Dangers to which I expos’d my self.  
 “ Since Matters are come to this Pass,  
 “ I’ll get me home to *Phrya*, to my own  
 “ Country, with my Vessels. I don’t  
 “ think that you, contemptible as you  
 “ are, will acquire any great Riches or  
 “ Possessions here.” *Agamemnon*, King of  
 Men, return’d him this Answer: “ Fly  
 “ then, if you are inclin’d to’t; I shan’t  
 “ court you to stay; there are enough  
 “ remaining that honour me, and a-  
 “ bove all, the wise *Jupiter*: You are  
 “ to me the most odious of all the  
 “ Kings of Celestial Extract; you al-  
 “ ways delight in Quarrels, Wars, and  
 “ Devastations. If you are couragious,  
 “ it is the Gods have made you so: Be-  
 “ gone to your Country with your Vef-  
 “ sels and your Companions; go,  
 “ reign over your Myrmidons; I have  
 “ no more Value for you, nor am I

“ in

upon HOMER's Iliad. 579

“ in the least discomposed at your Re-  
“ sentments: I'll return you Threats  
“ for Threats. Since *Apollo* deprives  
“ me of my *Chryseis*, I'll send her in  
“ my Ship with my Companions: But  
“ I'll force away the beautiful *Bri-*  
“ *seis*, your Present; I'll go in my  
“ own Person to look for her in your  
“ Tent, that you may know how much  
“ greater I am than you, that others may  
“ take Warning from your Rashness, of  
“ putting themselves upon the Level  
“ with me.” Readers are here in these  
two Discourses immediately sensible of  
the Usefulness of the Epithets that al-  
ways follow the Words, and which have  
never any Relation to the Circumstances;  
the Grossness and Rudeness of the Re-  
proaches, some of which have nothing  
to do with the Subject; the bad ranging  
of the Parts; and in fine, the Weakness  
of the whole Contexture. But tho' all  
these Faults have been extremely dis-  
guis'd in Madam D.'s Translation, it  
would not be improper to read it in  
B. I. (p. 11.) to compare it with the  
Imitation of Mr. Racine, which is as  
follows:

P p 2      ACHILLE.

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### ACHILLE.

*Et que m'a fait à moy cette Troye où je  
cours ?  
Au pied de ses remparts quel interest  
m'appelle ?  
Pour qui sour à la voix d'une mere im-  
mortelle,  
Et d'un pere éperdu negligéant les avis,  
Vay je y chercher la mort tant prédite à  
leur fils ?  
Jamais vaisseaux partis des rives du Sca-  
mandre,  
Aux Champs Thessaliens oferent ils des-  
cendre ?  
Et jamais dans Larisse un lâche ravif-  
seur,  
Me vint-il enlever ou ma femme, ou ma  
sœur.  
Qu'ay je à me plaindre, où sont les per-  
tes que j'ai faites ?  
Je n'y vais que pour vous barbare que  
vous êtes,  
Pour vous à que des Grecs moy seul je ne  
dois rien,  
Vous que j'ay fait nommer & leur Chef &  
le mien,  
Vous que mon bras vengeoit dans Lesbos  
enflammé,  
Avant que vous eussiez assemblé vòtre  
armée.*

*Et*



upon HOMER's Iliad. 581

*Et quel fut le dessein qui nous assemble  
tous ?*

*Ne courons-nous pas rendre Helene à son  
époux ?*

*Depuis quand pense-t-on qu'inutile à moy-  
même,*

*Je me laisse ravir une épouse que j'aime ?  
Seul d'un honteux affront votre frere  
blessé,*

*A-t-il droit de venger son amour offense ?  
Qu'il poursuive, s'il veut, son épouse  
enlevée,*

*Hu'il cherche nne victoire à mon sang  
reservée ;*

*Je ne connois Priam, Helene ni Paris,  
Je voulois votre fille, & ne pars qu'à ce  
prix.*

AGAMEMNON.

*Fayez donc, retournez dans votre Thessa-  
lie.*

*Moi-même je vous rends le serment qui  
vous lie.*

*Assez d'autres viendront à mes ordres  
soumis,*

*Si couvrir des lauriers qui vous furent  
promis,*

*Et par d'heureux exploits forçant la De-  
stinée,*

*Trouveront d'Ilion la fatale journée.*

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## ACHILLE.

*Et que m'a fait à moy cette Troye où je cours ?*

*Au pied de ses remparts quel interest m'appelle ?*

*Pour qui sour à la voix d'une mere immortelle,*

*Et d'un pere éperdu negligéant les avis,  
Vay je y chercher la mort tant prédite à leur fils ?*

*Jamais vaisseaux partis des rives du Scamandre,*

*Aux Champs Thessaliens oferent ils descendre ?*

*Et jamais dans Larisse un lâche ravisseur,*

*Me vint-il enlever ou ma femme, ou ma sœur.*

*Qu'ay je à me plaindre, où sont les pertes que j'ai faites ?*

*Je n'y vais que pour vous barbare que vous êtes,*

*Pour vous à que des Grecs moy seul je ne dois rien,*

*Vous que j'ay fait nommer & leur Chef & le mien,*

*Vous que mon bras vengeoit dans Lesbos enflammé,*

*Avant que vous eussiez assemblé vôtre armée.*

*Et*

*upon HOMER's Iliad. 581*

*Et quel fat le dessein qui nous assembla  
tous ?*

*Ne courons-nous pas rendre Helene à son  
époux ?*

*Depuis quand pense-t-on qu'<sup>il</sup> inutile à moy-  
même,*

*Je me laisse ravir une épouse que j'aime ?  
Seul d'un honteux affront vôtre frere  
blessé,*

*A-t-il droit de venger son amour offense ?  
Qu'il poursuive, s'il veut, son épouse  
enlevée,*

*Hu il cherche nne victoire à mon sang  
reservée ;*

*Je ne connois Priam, Helene ni Paris,  
Je voulois vôtre fille, & ne pars qu'à ce  
prix.*

**AGAMEMNON.**

*Fayez donc, retournez dans vôtre Thessa-  
lie.*

*Moi-même je vous rends le serment qui  
vous lie.*

*Assez d'autres viendront à mes ordres  
soumis,*

*Si couvrir des lauriers qui vous furent  
promis,*

*Et par d'heureux exploits forçant la De-  
stinée,*

*Trouveront d'Ilion la fatale journée.*



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*J'entrevois vos mépris, & juge à vos  
discours,  
Combien j'acheterois vos superbes secours.  
De la Grece déjà vous vous rendez l'ar-  
bitre,  
Ses Rois à vous oïr m'ont paré d'un vain  
titre,  
Fier de votre valeur, tout, si je vous en  
crois,  
Doit marcher, doit fléchir, doit trembler  
sous vos loix,  
Un bien-fait reproché tint toujours lieu  
d'offense;  
Je veux moins de valeur, & plus d'o-  
béissance:  
Fayez, je ne crains point votre impuissant  
courage,  
Et je romps tous les nœuds qui m'atta-  
chent à vous.*

Here is nothing either defective or  
superfluous; and it is evident from this  
Comparison, how much Force the Just-  
ness and Propriety of Style gives to  
Discourse, and Beauty even to Poetry;  
in a Word, whatever Jest or Raillery  
may be cast upon Philosophical Criticks,  
we require no other Mathematicks or  
Geometry than this.

*Racine* in his *Andromache* has made  
mention of *Hector's Farewell*; but what  
is

upon HOMER's Iliad. 583

is most surprizing, is, that the *French* Poet, who was a great Admirer of the *Greek* Poet, and who endeavour'd but to imitate him, cou'd not make Use of one single Word of his Original in a Fact which he borrow'd from him. The chief Difference between them, is, that as in the first *Hector* basely foretells to his Wife the Ruin of *Troy*, in the second he very reasonably says,

*J'ignore quel succès le sort garde à mes armes.*

Nevertheless, I meet People every Day that honour *Homer* for this Passage in *Racine*. I don't here mean a Multitude of ignorant or arrogant Men, who in the present Dispute talk louder and more injuriously than others, tho' they have read *Homer* neither in the *Greek*, which they understand not; nor in the *Latin*, which they know nothing of; nor in the *French*, that they understand too much, and who dislike him upon reading the first Pages: But I mean wise Men, that have actually read *Homer*, and to whom in this Passage, as in many others, a false Remembrance induces them to think, that *Homer* has said what he has not, because he ought to have

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said it, following the Idea which they have form'd of him, as of a great Painter and an ingenious Poet ; and to make an End of explaining to prejudiced Men their own Machine, this Idea often acts in them in their actual Perusal, and makes them find in *Homer* Sentiments or Discourses, of which he scarce furnishes some Words or Passages, which being well examin'd, have sometimes a Sense even quite contrary to that they admire.

The Want of Justness in *Homer* often produces an Obscurity ; but we must allow, that there is not in all Antiquity an Author whose Turn of Expression is more clear : His Sense, in one Period, which is generally very free and disengaged, seldom exceeds two Verses : Thus, the Obscurity of which I accuse *Homer*, is not an Obscurity of Construction, but an Obscurity of Omission. But this last is always found in his Descriptions, which require most Exactness : The Buckler, for Example, is nothing else but a Heap of Obscurities ; we are in doubt about the ranging of the Mettles that compose it, its exterior Figure, the Situation of the Heavens, of the Earth, and of the Ocean, of the Unity or Plurality of its Pictures, and of the Rest or Motion of the Figures : But besides this, it is absolutely



upon HOMER'S Iliad. 585

folutely impossible to understand the Position of the two Armies. But as *Homer* is to be commended in every thing, *Eustathius*, finding in the 17th B. a Place which Madam D. calls (3. 455) the most obscure and embarrass'd in the whole *Iliad*, says, that *Homer* affected this Obscurity, to proportion his Diction to the Disorder and Confusion of the Battle he relates. A Poet whom one thus eternally justifies and vindicates, may write what he pleases.

It is much after the same Manner that Madam D. justifies a very embroil'd Discourte, which *Achilles* makes to the Heralds that came to take away *Briseïs* in the 1st B. (p. 22.) "*Achilles*, says she, (1. 308.) explains himself here a little obscurely on purpose." The Intricacy *Achilles* is guilty of in this Passage, proceeds from his first having answer'd the Heralds, that he held them innocent of the Injury he had receiv'd, and that *Agamemnon* alone was culpable; and afterwards declaring to them a Design of Revenge, which much less regarded *Agamemnon*, who was alone guilty, than all the other *Grecians* that were innocent. I am not at all surpriz'd that in undertaking to say so unjust a Thing,

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Thing, he does not know how to get off.

We must here say something of his ambiguous Expressions; the first and most considerable, is that of *Agamemnon*, as he was putting his Troops in the Order of Battle in the 4th B. (p. 150.) upon Occasion of which *Madam D.* makes a long Remark, which I shall take the Liberty to examine; she falls upon these two Verses, δ. 306.

Οσδε κ' ἀνὴρ ἀπὸ ὧν ὀχέων ἐπὶ ἄρμαθ' ἱκῆται  
Εγχεί ορεξασθω, ἔπειτα πολλὸν φέρτερον οὕτως.

“ This Place, says *Madam D.* (1. 422.)  
“ is remarkable for its Ambiguity. *Eustathius* writes, that these two Verses  
“ of *Homer* may have four different Senses, and all very reasonable; the first,  
“ That he who by fighting upon his  
“ Chariot, shall gain a Chariot from  
“ his Enemies, continue still to fight,  
“ without retiring from the Combat to  
“ secure his Booty.” This first Sense cannot be drawn from it without the Help of a Commentator. The second,  
“ If any one should chance to be thrown  
“ from his Chariot, the next to him should  
“ lend him his Pike, to help him up to his.”

This

upon HOMER's Iliad. 587

This is the most reasonable of all without Comparison, and the only one that may be render'd into *Latin* in the same Number of Words, "*Qui à suo curru ad*  
"*alienum transferit, hasta sublevetur.*"

The Third is directly opposite to the Second, "If any one be thrown from  
"his Chariot, and would get up into  
"one belonging to another, that he  
"should resist him with his Pike, and  
"not receive him, because that would  
"slacken the Fight." This Third is abominable, with respect to the Inhumanity of repulsing a Friend; and besides, the Diversion there would be in endeavouring to repulse him, would slacken the Battle much more. And the Fourth, that which I have follow'd, *i. e.* "That  
"those who being overturn'd from their  
"Chariot, should get up into the Chariot of any of their Companions,  
"should not undertake to guide Horses they are not acquainted with, but  
"think of nothing but fighting with  
"their Darts and Javelins." This can't be called translating, but comparing.  
"*Eustathius*, continues *Madam D.* adds,  
"that *Homer* has sometimes affected  
"introducing after this Manner many  
"Senses into his Verses, to shew the  
"Force of his Genius, and to make appear



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“pear that even in his Equivocations, he  
 “is *παραγινωσ ἀνευ Ψόγου*, and that which  
 “way soever he falls, he always falls  
 “on his Feet; but he never does this  
 “but very properly, and when he is  
 “speaking to a Multitude: One Part  
 of which, taking the Order in one Sense,  
 and another in another, will throw into  
 their Ranks the Confusion and Disorder  
 of a Rout, in the Beginning of an En-  
 gagement. “What an Advantage, *con-*  
 “*tinues nevertheless Madam D.* would  
 “it not be, to be able to say four dif-  
 “ferent Things by one single Expression,  
 “and all very good? Men have seldom  
 “found this Secret; for my Part, I, who  
 “could not preserve this happy Ambi-  
 “guity in my Language, have chosen  
 “the Sense that appeared most natural  
 “to me.” We have already seen that  
 it is the Second and not the Fourth that  
 must be taken. But in fine, the *French*  
 Academy has at this Day several Mem-  
 bers that are capable of deciding as  
 learnedly the Difficulties of a War, as  
 those of a Language; It is to them I  
 refer *Madam D.* to know if four Senses,  
 either different or contradictory, which  
 a General should leave in an Order gi-  
 ven upon Point of Battle, would be a  
 Mark of his Wisdom or good Elocution.

At

upon HOMER's Iliad. 589

At least, this was not the Practice of *Telemachus*: If he gave any Order, it was always in the most clear and simple Terms, and he repeated it over again the better to instruct him that was to execute it; he would first read in his Eyes whether he well comprehended him, and afterwards make him familiarly explain in what Sense he had taken his Words. *Telem. B. 12.*

But we need refer Madam D. but to herself. Ambiguity is terribly inveigh'd against, and run down by her, in her Remark upon the 17th B. where, upon Occasion of the obscure Article of the two Armies upon the Buckler, she says, (3. 481.) "The Ancients have pretended that *Homer* here expresses himself in a Manner so equivocal, that this Passage may admit of three quite different Explications; which may be seen in *Eustathius*, (p. 1159.) As for me, I find that this Poet has spoke very clear and natural; Obscurity is no Vice in *Homer*." *Homer* is obscure, as I have before said, in all those Descriptions which require Exactness; and it must be allow'd, that he is so in some Places, since the *Greek* Interpreters have found him so. What is most certain, is, that Madam D. defending *Homer* from

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from Ambiguity, in order to justify him from the Fault of Obscurity, acknowledges that this last is the Effect of the other.

The second Example of Ambiguity, will be found to be the Greek Expression in B. 6. Z. 234. Γλαύκῳ Κρονίδης φρενας ἐξέλετο Ζεὺς. which *Homer* makes Use of to express his Judgment of the Exchange that *Glaucus* made of his Arms, which were Gold, for those of *Diomedes*, which were only Copper. The natural Sense of the Greek Words is, that *Jupiter* deprived *Glaucus* of his Judgment. Those that well understood *Homer*, are firmly persuaded that he never meant any Thing else; and tho' the Interpretation of *Porphiry* would have it that the Term ἐξέλετο, signifies that *Jupiter* took away *Glaucus* his Life, the ancient Readers of *Homer* could see therein no other than the first Signification. The Proverb χρύσεα χαλκείων, drawn hence, \* which has passed throughout all Greece, and has been made Use of by *Plato*, *Aristotle*, and even *Cicero* himself, has always signified a Man that is trick'd or bubbled: *Martial* was of the same Opinion, when he said :

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\* Vid. Adag. *Ærasm. Chil.* 1. Cent. 2.



upon HOMER's Iliad. 591

*Tam stupidus nunquam, nec tu, puto,  
Glauce, fuisti.*

*Porphiry* came in the third Age to present us with another Interpretation; which had even so little Success, that the *Latin* Translators of *Homer* adhered to the first Sense. I don't pretend to have read them all; but of pretty many that have passed thro' my Hands, I have found none, except *Spandanus*, that has put *mentem extulit*; all the others say, *mentem ademit*. Even the Translators, who have allowed themselves a Scope and Latitude, and have endeavoured to find out Graces and Beauties, have made nothing of this; for *Larentius Valla*, who has made an elegant Translation of *Homer* into *Latin* Prose, says, *Jupiter enim Homini mentem eripuit*; and the German *Eobanus Hessus*, to whom *Madam D.* \* gives great Encomiums, which all Men of Learning will not allow of, translates thus in Verse:

*Jupiter hic, animumque. & sanæ mentis  
acumen;  
Eripuit Glauco.*

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\* Of the Causes of the Corruption of Taste, p.  
334.

Thus

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Thus *Mad. D.* favours *Homer*, but does not translate him, when she adopts into her Text the Interpretation of *Porphiry*; which is nothing else but a vain, groundless, and strained Refinement and Subtlety. But admitting this to be the genuine Thought of *Homer*, there always remains in his Expression a very vicious Ambiguity; for your thinking nobly of your self signifies nothing, if by your Terms and Expressions you excite mean and base Thoughts in the Minds of your Readers. I should nevertheless have had nothing to say, if it had been only *Romans* and *Frenchmen* that had taken the ἐξέλετο of *Homer* in a bad Sense, for I might be answered, that this Word is perhaps placed in such a Manner, as not to be equivocal to the *Greeks*. But this Apology vanishes when we find that they are *Greeks* that have reproached *Homer* for this Decision; so far, that *Plutarch* says, that *Glaucus* was not such a Fool, in giving to his Adversary Golden Armour, for excellent Arms of Steel or Brass, that were more proper for Battle.

To this Purpose I remember a Remark of *Mr. D.* upon this Stanza of the *Carmen Seculare* of *Horace*.

*Cui*

upon HOMER's Iliad. 593

*Cui Trojanorum parti per ardentem sine  
fraude Trojam,  
Castus Æneas Patriæ superstes  
Liberum munivit iter.*

Mr. D.'s Remark is as follows: "Ser-  
vius upon the first B. of the *Æneids*,  
says, that *Horace* has put here these  
Words, *sine fraude*, to defend *Æneas*  
from the Reproach that had been cast  
upon him of having betray'd his  
Country, to have an Opportunity of  
saving himself: But this learned  
Grammarians surely deceives himself;  
*Horace* was too discreet and polite, to  
renew in the Minds of the *Romans* a  
Suspicion of this Nature, upon an  
Occasion so solemn as this was; he  
very well knew that this Vindication  
would not have satisfy'd *Augustus*,  
and that to please him, he ought to  
have been ignorant that *Æneas* had  
ever been accused of so horrible a  
Piece of Cowardice: *Sine fraude* is  
certainly put here then for *sine noxa*."

This Remark is full of Politeness and  
Decorum on the Part of Mr. D. but if  
the *Latin* Expression excited in the Minds  
of the *Romans*, the least Idea of this Re-

Qq

proach,



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proach, the Remark turns against *Horace*; and so much the more, because even in *Homer*, B. 13. (p. 283.) it is said, "That *Æneas* always nourish'd a  
 " secret Malice and Resentment against  
 " *Priam*, because he did not reward  
 " his Services with any Mark of Trust  
 " and Distinction." Thus there is much Reason to believe that the *sine fraude* presented this bad Sense to the *Romans*. In Effect, *Servius*, who was a *Roman*, and liv'd about the fourth Century, found it therein; which proves that the Poets in the Time of *Augustus*, how polite soever they were, did not always arrive to the Pitch of our modern Commentators.

Here I begin a Vindication of our Language, against the Reproach which Madam D. has cast upon it, of not being able to express the Beauties in *Homer*, laying upon this Weakness the bad Effect of the greatest Part of his Poem in *French*. Madam D. in her Preface collects a certain Number of chief Objections against *Homer*; and above all, the frightful and wicked Idea he gives of the Godhead: All this passes away like Water, and she answers every Thing with a marvellous Facility. But as to the

upon HOMER's Iliad. 595

the Diction, she will find it a terrible Charge;\* her Scruple, no doubt, is very well plac'd. She preserves it in the whole Course of her Remarks, which express a profound Modesty and Humility, because she speaks only *French*. "I am entirely destitute, *says she*, of the Advantage of my Original . . . either I or my Language can't approach it, (3. 565.)" At other Times, assuming a more sorrowful Tone, which consists of nothing else but formal Complaints and Outrages: "Our Language, *says she*, is sometimes unhappily nice and delicate, (1. 283.) what wou'd be fine and graceful in *Greek*, would not be so in *French*, and could be express'd but in flat and mean Terms, (3. 562.) All the proper Words in our Language, especially in Arts, are either low or very disagreeable, and it has nothing to sustain them, which absolutely ruins Poetry." (3. 598.) But first, Translators ought never to complain of their Language; not only because no one ought to pretend to know all the Advantages, Delicacies and Graces of his Language, but also because every Transla-

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\* Pref. p. 29.

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tion is in itself a forc'd Work. In fine, tho' Men have pretty near the same principal Ideas, the Difference of Times and Climates, and consequently of Objects and Impressions, puts a very great Difference between the insensible Metaphors, or the approach'd Images, which express those principal Ideas in different Languages. We must not then be surprized that a Translator, who is always able to transfer from one Language into another, a Thought or Sentiment that he sees in his Author, can't likewise introduce into his Translation the approach'd Image, the insensible Metaphor, or, in a Word, the very same Expression of his Author. This is the Reason of the Trouble Translators are at, and of the Disadvantage of Translations, which, with Respect to the Expression, can hardly ever give other than Equivalents, which very much weaken or alter the principal Thought. But it will always be an unjust Rashness in Translators, when in stead of laying this Inconvenience upon the Difference of the two Languages, or their own Incapacity, they ascribe it to the Poverty of the Language into which they translate; for I will maintain there would be found the same Difficulty in  
translating



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translating *French* into *Latin* or *Greek*,  
as *Greek* or *Latin* into *French*.

One of the strongest Proofs they think to bring of the Inferiourity of one Language with Respect to another, is their being oblig'd to seek out Circumlocutions and Periphrases in the subordinate Language, to render an Expression of the superior Language pithy and concise. Madam D. estimates this Difference from a Passage in *Homer*; *θεῖν δ' ἦ μιν ἀμφέχουτ' ὀμφη*, B. 41. "It appear'd to him that  
" the celestial Voice that spread itself  
" round about him, eccho'd still in his  
" Ears." "What there is here, *says*  
" *she*, (i. 333.) very surprising and advantageous for *Homer*, is, that I was  
" not able to express in two Lines, what  
" he has said in three Words." Now I affirm that every good Translator will find the same Weakness; and my Proof of the Fact is, that every Translation wrought with Care, is longer than the Original; because the Translator being always in Fear, lest his Equivalents shou'd not entirely express the Sense of of his Author, is often engag'd to put two Words for one. This lengthening of Translations is seen not only in *Greek* and *Latin* Works, render'd into our Language, which is thought much

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inferior to those two; but also of many Works that have been translated out of *French* into *Latin*, or out of *Latin* into *Greek*. I shan't mention any Examples in Verse, because they being to be measur'd, Translators willingly confine themselves to the Number of the Original; tho' I may quote some which have exceeded this Number; as those that translated the Ode of *Namur*. But as to Works in Prose, among many *Latin* Versions longer than the *French* Original, and which are all sufficiently known, I shall only instance in the Panegyric upon the King, made by Mr. *Pelisson*. The *Latin*, tho' by a good Hand, exceeds the *French* by a full third; without mentioning the *Spanish* and *Italian* Versions of the same Discourse, much longer also than the Original.

It is the same with some *Latin* Works render'd into *Greek*, as *Pænius's Eutropius*, of which there was a very fine Edition published at *Oxford* in the Year 1703, wherein we clearly see that the *Greek* is more copious and verbose than the *Latin*. But as this Translator is neither elegant nor faithful, as the Bishop of *Auranches* has remark'd,\* I shan't

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\* *Huetius de interpretatione*, p. 133.

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insist upon his Example. But we have *Cæsar's Commentaries* in two Columns, the one *Latin* and the other *Greek*, where the *Greek*, tho' of a smaller Character, often runs in upon the *Latin*. *Jungerman*, who caus'd it to be printed at *Francfort* in 1606, attributes this *Greek* Version to *Planudius* rather than *Theodorus Gaza*, whom some have made the Author of it: But I am more inclin'd to give the Honour of it to *Marchal Strozzi*, who had made an excellent One, in the Judgment of the learned Men of his Time that had seen it, as *Brantome* relates at length in the Volume of foreign Captains. However it is, *Theodorus Gaza*, who was a *Greek* by Origin, and one of the ablest Men of his Time, has translated into *Greek* the Treatise of *Cicero*, entitl'd, *Of Old Age*. The *Greek* is always longer than the *Latin*; so that *Theodorus* makes five entire Verses of two and a half of *Ennius*, which are at the Frontispiece of the Work. To conclude, Father *Petau*, who knew as much *Greek* and *Latin* as the most learned among the native *Greeks* and *Romans*, has translated into *Greek* *Cicero's* Treatise of *Friendship*; and even his Exactness has produc'd a greater Length in the *Greek*



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than in the *Latin*, for the natural and obvious Reason we at first assign'd.

But the Difficulty of translating into another Language the Thoughts of an Author, is nothing in Comparison to the Difficulty that is found in transferring thither all his Beauties; for it will very often happen that the Beauties which depend almost always upon some Elegance or Simplicity of Expression, find nothing in the Language into which they are translated, which answers to the Place in which they occur in the Original: And can this be the Fault of the Language into which we translate it? I can never allow this of the *French*, in Comparison of the *Latin*; for I affirm, that our Language is infinitely more brisk and gay than the *Latin*: I wou'd, for Example, that setting aside all Satire and Obscenity, one shou'd translate into *Latin*, *Marot*, *la Fontaine*, and *Rousseau*. It is at least certain, that no Translation of Authors of Beauty and Pleasure has ever perfectly well succeeded in our Language, except that of *Lucian*. This partly proceeds from this, that the Translator, who admir'd nothing but what was reasonable, rendered himself a perfect Master of his Author, to change or cut off

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off entire Sentences. This is the only Way of making a Book of Beauty and Pleasantry, to be read as if it were originally writ in our Language. Setting aside then Writers, that translate with no other View, than that of causing to be understood by young Beginners ancient Authors of all Kinds, which is a very commendable Intention, but to which neither *D'Ablandcourt* nor *Madam D.* have confin'd themselves; I shou'd advise no Man that had not entirely renounc'd his own Advantage, to undertake any other Translations, than that of Historians, or other Authors that are curious as to Facts.

Next to Works of Diversion and Entertainment, serious and heroic Poets are the most dangerous to translate, especially when we wou'd translate them into Prose. I never yet found any one that had approved, or even comprehended *Madam D.*'s Maxim in her Preface, (p. 39.) where she says, That a Poet translated into Verse ceases being a Poet: But here is one that all the World will comprehend, and I am fully perswaded that it will be allow'd to be the only Thing that can be said upon this Matter, A Poet translated into Prose ceases being a Poet; and when  
translated

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translated into Verse, he becomes another Poet, good or bad as to the Versification, according to the Genius or Capacity of the Translator. One of the Reasons from which Madam D. draws her Maxim, is, because there has not yet been seen a good Translation of *Homer* in Verse; and does she think we have seen any good One in Prose? We have seen many learned and useful Ones like hers; but she must certainly be ignorant of what is every where said, if she thinks to have made *Homer* a Work equally agreeable to the *Lucian* of *Ablancourt*. But to do Justice; Madam D. has a very great Talent for Translation, but she was very much in the wrong in chusing a Poet, whose Beauties and Faults she ought to have left eternally buried in the *Greek*. Her Translation will contribute more to the Fall of *Homer* than our Criticisms, notwithstanding all her Efforts to support him, and improve him by her Stile: She is so far from being inferior to him in that Respect she complains of, that she has beautify'd him and adorn'd him, even to the Addition of Things, and the Swelling of the Stile; witness the Mistake concerning the Wild Boar, which I have remark'd in the Chapter of Battles, and her



upon HOMER's Iliad. 603

her Manner of translating a Verse in the 23d B. where she makes *Homer* say, (p. 310.) "That the Chariots flew with  
 " so much Swiftneſs and Impetuosity,  
 " that ſometimes they appear'd to touch  
 " the Clouds, and afterwards to precipitate  
 " themselves into a profound Abyſs." Does not this rather appear like the Representation of Vessels toss'd by a violent Tempest? Madam D. says, (3. 578.) that they run upon an uneven Way; yet if they were not vast Mountains and Valleys, her Exaggeration wou'd be beyond Measure: But besides, *Homer* tells us, that they ran ἐν λείῳ πεδίῳ. ψ. 359. which Madam D. her self translates (3. 310.) a flat and even Ground, which, exactly taken, signifies a united Soil. Besides, *Homer* only here exposes a natural and ordinary Effect of Bodies, that are dragg'd with an extreme Rapidity, viz. that sometimes they touch'd and sometimes quitted the Ground; this is all he means, and he expresses it perfectly well. ψ. 363.

" Ἀρματα δ' ἄλλοτε μὲν χθονὶ πίλνατο πούλυβο-  
 " τειρήν ἄλλοτε δ' αἴζαυκε μέτορα.

*Currus verò interdum quidem terræ appropinquabant almæ.*

*Interdum autem subsultabant sublimes.*

But

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But, excepting a few Places, where her Zeal hurts her Original, every where else she truly enriches *Homer's* Stile; which of itself is much more naked than is thought by those, who judge of this Poet only from the Encomiums of *Madam D.* *Mr. Boileau* was sensible of this, when he declar'd that in all the Passages which he had translated from *Homer*, he endeavour'd more to improve upon him than to follow him rigorously.\* Yet as the Reproach which I cast upon *Homer* must appear new to many People, I shall justify it by a very notable Example: I chuse two Passages, both out of the 13th B. of the *Iliad*: The one begins in the *Greek* at the 126th Verse, and the other at the 339th; the first is of eight Verses, and the second of six; they have been both join'd together in a little *Greek* Work, entituled, *Ἀγὼν Οὐρανοῦ καὶ Ἡσιόδου*, *A Combat between Homer and Hesiod*. The History of this Combat, which is writ by an Author who says he liv'd after the Time of the Emperor *Adrian*, is rejected by most Men of Learning: But it proves the Esteem that was set upon these two Pas-

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\* Notes upon Longin.

upon HOMER's Iliad. 605

fages in the *Iliad*, since they put it in  
*Homer's* Mouth, disputing with *Hesiod*  
the Prize of Poetry. I shall now trans-  
late them in proper Terms, and in a  
*French* Construction, but without any  
other Change or Alteration than what  
the Differences of two Languages re-  
quire: In a Word, I shall present you  
with *Homer*, and afterwards with Ma-  
dam D. " Round about the two *Ajax's*  
" were drawn up two strong Phalanx's,  
" which neither *Mars* himself, nor war-  
" like *Minerva*, who went from Rank  
" to Rank, could find any Fault with;  
" for those brave Men expected Divine  
" *Hector* with the choicest of the *Tro-*  
" *jans*, joining Pikes to Pikes, and  
" Bucklers to Bucklers: Thus one  
" Shield supported another, a Cask a  
" Cask, and one Man the other. Their  
" Head pieces, that were loaden with  
" Plumes of Feathers, touch'd one ano-  
" ther with the least Motion of the Head,  
" so close were the Files drawn up.  
" The bloody Engagement became ter-  
" rible, by the long Lances with which  
" they fought, and the strongest Eyes  
" were dazzled with the Splendor of the  
" shining Helmers, the polish'd Breast-  
" plates, and the bright Shields that  
" mov'd to and fro in the Battle. He  
" must



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“ must have had a stout Heart, that  
 “ cou’d have rejoic’d at the Sight of so  
 “ bloody a Fight, and not be over-  
 “ whelm’d with Grief.” Now let us see  
 Madam D.’s Translation in B. 13. (p.  
 261 and 274.) “ Immediately we see  
 “ the Phalanx’s rally about the two *A-*  
 “ *jax*’s, with so much Order and Reso-  
 “ lution, that neither *Mars* himself, nor  
 “ warlike *Pallas*, that run from Rank to  
 “ Rank, cou’d find any thing therein  
 “ worthy of Reproof: The most Vali-  
 “ ant place themselves in the Front,  
 “ and resolutely wait the Approach of  
 “ *Hector* and all the *Trojans*: The Ranks  
 “ are so close, that Pikes support Pikes,  
 “ Casks join to Casks, Bucklers lean  
 “ upon Bucklers, and the shining  
 “ Plumes wave upon one another, like  
 “ thick Tops of Trees in a Forrest,  
 “ when agitated by the Wind, they  
 “ mix and incorporate with one ano-  
 “ ther.—— Death reigns in all the  
 “ Ranks, Horror increases, and that  
 “ vast Number of Casks, Bucklers,  
 “ Breast-plates, Swords, and Pikes,  
 “ thrusting and jostling one another,  
 “ casts so great a Splendor, as the Eye  
 “ cannot endure: He must be of un-  
 “ daunted Courage, that can maintain  
 “ his wonted Mirth and Gaiety at the  
 “ Sight

upon HOMER's Iliad. 607

" Sight of so terrible a Combat, and  
" not be struck with Fear and Ter-  
" ror."

Among the Corrections and Embellishments that may be remark'd in this Parallel, I desire the Reader to observe the Comparison of the Plumes of Feathers with the Tops of Trees, of which *Homer* does not furnish one Word. Thus, from this Pattern, join'd to two others, which is seen in the same Chapter, the one of *Jupiter* giving to *Minerva* the Order that was dictated by *Juno*, and the other of the Dispute between *Agamemnon* and *Achilles*; we may surely conclude that Madam D.'s Translation, tho' very exact in the main as to the Thought, is notwithstanding, with Respect to the Style and Composition, a Translation the most deceitful and different from the Original, of any that ever was publish'd. I know besides, that Madam D. who has work'd upon her *Homer* several Years, had at first made a simple and literal Translation; but the Poem of *Telemachus* appearing about that Time, the great Reputation that it acquir'd from its first Publication, put Madam D. in fear for her *Homer*, and engag'd her to new model her Translation, and to dress the  
*Iliad*

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*Iliad* in the Stile of *Telemachus*. Tho' I had this Intimation from a Friend of Madam D.'s, I shou'd not have thought my self authoriz'd to reveal it, if it had not conduc'd to her Advantage. For this Fact proves, that having perceiv'd her Author incorrigible, as to good Sense and Manners, she thought to give him some Resemblance at least as to the Stile, to the chief Master-piece of Reason and poetical Morality. But at the same Time, what Matter of Triumph is it to *Telemachus*, of whom *Homer*'s professed Admirers could never say any good, and which has always been the Object of their secret Hate, upon the Account of the Honour it has brought to an Age, and the Shame with which it has branded *Homer*, of being forc'd to be a faint Imitator of a Modern? Yet as we are now in a very knowing Age, which always gives a true Rank and Reward to every thing, and where the lofty Stile can't repair a real Fault; *Homer*, notwithstanding all the Art of Madam D. appears still to us in his original Deformity. The Translation of *Martignac*, tho' so cold and insipid to our Ladies, does not yet deprive them of the good Opinion it has given them of *Virgil*, and does not furnish them above three

or



*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 609

or four essential Objections against him; whereas the Eloquence of Madam D. serves sometimes but to put the innumerable Number of *Homer's* Impieties and Absurdities in a clearer Light. Thus I regret the Loss of the first Translation, which wou'd have been at least more curious and diverting, by its pure and simple Representation of *Homer*. Nevertheless, all Things consider'd, as *Homer* maintains his own Reputation much more, by appearing tedious than ridiculous, our Language has done him more Honour than Wrong, in the State we now have him, and by the Means even of a Lady, who seems to have undertaken his Translation but to have Room to cry down the *French*, with eternal Complaints and injurious Remarks. Her Reproaches are reduc'd to two principal Ones; the Poorness of our Language, and its Want of Harmony: As to this, I shall endeavour to satisfy the Reader in the Conclusion of this Chapter and the whole Work.

And first, I remark, that the true Riches of a Language does not consist in having many Terms, to express one and the same Thing directly under the same Aspect or Resemblance; but it consists in having proper and peculiar

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Terms,

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Terms, to express the Sensations or Affections of the Soul according to their smallest Differences, or most insensible Degrees; as, Contentment, Gaiety, Joy, Chearfulness, Raptures; or Heaviness, Vexation, Trouble, Grief, and Despair. Thus tho' the *Greeks* may have a greater Number of perfect synonymous Words than we, that is to say, those Terms that express the same Thing exactly in the same Sense: The Spirit of Justness proper to Moderns, makes us value our Language, because it has no Terms but what are singular in the Point of their Signification; and we only attribute the Honour of writing well to those Writers that are sensible of this singular Term, and who make use of it in its proper Signification. I own that Poets are not oblig'd upon this Subject to all the Exactness of Authors that write in Prose; and the Constraint of Verse often forces them to employ Words of an approach'd Signification. In *Racine*, for Example, *Hermione* says, speaking to *Orestes*;

*Quelle honte pour moi, quel triomphe pour  
luy,  
De voir mon infortune égaler son en-  
nuy!*

*Ennuy,*

## upon HOMER's Iliad. 611

*Ennuy*, which is here put, would not have been a proper Word in Prose; but how copious soever the *Greek* Language is, and what Liberty soever *Homer* has given himself in Poetry, the Necessity, or at least the Conveniency of his Verse, has thrown him into much greater Confusions and Disorders. I shall only alledge, for an Example, the Conclusion of the Battle we before quoted; where he says, "He must have had  
" a stout Heart, that cou'd have re-  
" joic'd at the Sight of this furious  
" Combat, and not be seiz'd with Sor-  
" row and Concern." ἡβήσσειεν, οὐδ' ἀ-  
καχοίτο. v. 344. I wou'd fain know who cou'd expect to be rejoic'd at the Sight of a Battle? And can it, on the other Hand, properly be call'd an Object of Griet? He ought necessarily to have put in the first Part, *Who could have remain'd quiet and undisturb'd?* And Madam D. has very wisely corrected the second, by saying, *Struck with Fear and Terror.* In short, he is no more just in his Verbs and Nouns, than in his Epithets; and we may easily judge of the one by the other.

In the second Place, I remark, that the new Discoveries of so many Secrets of Nature, the Progress that has been



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In the second Place, I remark, that the new Discoveries of so many Secrets of Nature, the Progress that has been

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made in our Age in all those Sciences that depend upon Physick and Geometry, and, to conclude, the Invention of so many Arts absolutely unknown to the Ancients, have introduc'd into our Language an infinite Number of Terms which the *Greeks* never had. This would be easy to verify, by the immense Collection which would result from the particular Description of all the Arts, which the Academy of Sciences have made their constant Study, since their second Institution, without meddling with any Matters of Religion, Policy, Law, War, Commerce, or any Sort of Customs, Practices, or Exercises, that regard the Mind, Manners, and Affairs, as well private as publick, which are all express'd in *French* by a vast Quantity and Variety of proper Terms. But to speak only of what is already done: The single Terms of Art publish'd at the End of the Dictionary of the *French* Academy, compose as many Volumes as the Terms in common Use and Practice. It does not then belong to them who have not adorn'd their Minds with natural Philosophy, and all that depends upon Physick, as well geometrical as experimental, to accuse a Language of Poorness and Scarcity, when they are ignorant



upon HOMER's Iliad. 613

ignorant of its greatest Advantages: Or rather, it is necessary to know every thing, to be Master of a Language that expresses every thing with the same Facility, Grace, and Exactness. Thus being sensible of the Riches and Advantage we have drawn from the *Greek* and *Latin* Tongues, I maintain, that ours, such as it now is, adding what it has gain'd from the two first to what it has acquir'd from its own Foundation, is richer and more copious than either, as well in Discourses of mere Pleasure and Entertainment, as in the Explication of Arts and Sciences. For it is impossible but that there will be introduced into common Practice and Custom, many of those Terms proper to Arts and Sciences, in Proportion as they became more known and familiar; as is easy to be perceiv'd in Father *Mateb*, Mr. *Fontenelle* and other Authors, who having join'd to the Talent of Writing, the Knowledge of Physick and the liberal Arts, continually draw from thence many very happy Images and Expressions. The Example of these Authors, to whom proper Words, or Metaphors as fine as proper Words, costs nothing, or seem to cost nothing, very much reflects upon those Imitators, who having never thought

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but after another, and especially after Authors of another Language, can gain no Advantage from ours.

Hereupon, I think. one of the most advantageous Exercises that can be made, to acquire the Talent of writing nobly, exactly and fluently in *French*, is to make your self a Master in the Knowledge of natural Philosophy; to explain the Particulars in such a Manner, as to make them relish'd by those that have not studied them. The Justness, Clearness, and Elegancy that must be sought to accomplish this Design, forces the Mind to send forth its utmost Efforts, after which all other Matters are no more than Play to it; and you'll never find that a Writer, who hath acquitted himself honourably this Way, can be wanting in proper Terms and happy Expressions on other Subjects, which in Comparison of them, have no Manner of Difficulty; at least, it is certain, that Authors that join Learning and this Exercise, to the Talent of Writing they receiv'd from Nature, will always excel others in the Exactness of their Ideas, the Choice of their Terms, and the Clearness of their Turn and Expression. Accordingly, the best Writers in our Language, speaking  
only

upon HOMER's Iliad. 615

only of them with Regard to Prose, either ought to have been, or really were Geometricians. I make this Observation, without fearing being suspected to speak of my self; for besides that I don't pretend to the Talent of Writing, I am the meanest of Geometricians.

As to the Harmony, upon which the second Head of Accusation depends, which we have here to refute; the Masters of our Language, who otherways were great Admirers and Defenders of the Ancients, as *Despréaux* and *Bruyere*, have boasted of this Harmony in our Verse: One of them has mark'd him to whom we owe its first Source and Original.

*Enfin Maherbe vint, & le premier en  
France,  
Amena dans les Vers une juste cadence.*

The other has acknowledg'd it in the most perfect of our Poets: "The Versification of *Racine*, says he, is correct, rich in his Rhimes, elegant, copious, and harmonious." And how is it possible that there shou'd not be Grace and Harmony in a Language, which is provided with Words of all Sorts of Length, and the Terminations so different, that one may engage to



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compose above two hundred Verses without falling into the same Rhime. But to shew this Harmony, and the Care our Poets take to give it to their Verses, it is necessary to know the first Rules of our Poetry, without giving the following Lines as a Standard of *French Verse* :

*Lydie vous dormez d'un paisible sommeil.\** Or,  
*Mon corps s'en est allé, & mon nom seul me reste. †* Or,  
*Quand on y entre libre on n'est jamais esclave. ‡*

If Mr. D. who in his Remarks upon *Longinus*, proceeded so far as to scan the Prose of *Demosthenes*, had honour'd our Poetry with the least of his Regard, he wou'd be sensible that it neither admits of an *Hiatus*, nor pure *E* for a Feminine, without *Elysian* in the Body of a Verse.

With Respect to Prose, Mr. *Despreaux* has remark'd, that *Balsac* has given it

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\* *Madam D.'s Translat. of the 25th Odyss. of the first B. of Homer.*

† *Rem. upon the Art of Poetry.*

‡ *Translat. of the Pref. of Plato.*

*upon* HOMER's *Iliad*. 617

its just Cadence and Harmony; and indeed, this is evident in many of our Works; among others, for Example, the learned and sublime Discourse of Mr. *de Meaux* upon universal History; the Reflections of Mr. *Pellisson* upon Religion; the Funeral Oration and Panegyrics of Mr. *Fleschier*. I shall moreover affirm, (for Merit, tho' in an Adversary, demands our Praise and Commendation,) that I think Madam *D.*'s Style very sweet and harmonious, especially in her Prefaces; and that which is affix'd to the Head of the *Iliad*, for Softness of Style, and fine Learning, is perhaps one of the noblest Productions of a Mind not skill'd in Geometry.

But, to enter into some Particulars, Madam *D.* accuses our Language for not having Words happy enough, to express small and trifling Things gracefully and nobly. Mr. *Despreaux*, who is rather to be believ'd than she in this Matter, has judg'd quite otherways; and he has look'd upon the Art of expressing trifling Things nobly, even in *French Verse*, to be very difficult, but nevertheless very possible to be attain'd; since he thus speaks of it in an Epistle to his Gardiner.

*Antoine,*

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*Antoine, de nous deux, tu crois donc, je  
le voy,*

*Que le plus occupé dans ce jardin, c'est  
toy :*

*O que tu changerois d'avis & de langage,  
Si deux jours seulement libre du jardi-  
nage,*

*Tout à coup devenu Poëte & bel esprit,  
Tu t'allois engager à polir un écrit,  
Qui dit, sans s'avilor, les plus petites  
choses,*

*Fit des plus secs chardons des œillets & des  
Roses,*

*Et scût même au discours de la rusticité  
Donner de l'élégance & de la dignité.*

Here is at the same Time a Testimony and an Example, contrary to the Opinion of Madam D. I find likewise in a Letter of Mr. Despreaux, address'd to Mr. de Maucroix, and printed in his posthumous Edition, that all his Life he had sought the Art we speak of. Here are his Words: " When I write Verse, " I always endeavour to say what was " never before said in our Language : " This is what I chiefly affected in a new " Epistle I had made;\* wherein I give an " Account of all that I have done since

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\* His Epistle to his Verses.



*upon* HOMER's Iliad. 619

" I came into the World ; my  
" Failings, my Age, my Inclinations,  
" Manners and Customs ; I tell who  
" was my Father and Mother ; I insert  
" all the Degrees of my Fortune, how  
" I was first introduc'd at Court, and  
" how I left it ; the Troubles and  
" Misfortunes that have happen'd to  
" me, and the Works that I have  
" composed. These are a pretty many  
" Trifles contain'd in a few Words, since  
" the whole Piece consists but of 130  
" Verses ; and I have found that all  
" those to whom I have recited them,  
" have been more struck with them  
" than any other of my Compositions.  
" Would you believe it, Sir, that one  
" of the Passages the most cry'd up, is  
" where I say, that being now arriv'd to  
" the 57th Year of my Age, I ought no  
" longer to court the Approbation of  
" the Publick.

*Mais aujourd'hui qu'enfin la vicillesse  
venue,  
Sous mes faux cheveux blonds déjà toute  
chenuë,  
A jetté sur ma teste avec ses doigts pe-  
sants ;  
Onze lustres complets surchargez de deux  
ans.*

" I

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“ I think the Perriwig is very happily  
“ described in these four Verses.”

It is certain Mr. *Despreaux* has perfectly well executed the Design he always had of expressing elegantly in *French Verse* the most trifling and minute Things: And from hence it proceeds, that his Works please and delight Children, and Persons otherways the least proper for Study and Reading. This is a great Sign that an Author hath hit what is true and natural. For after all, I admire with all *France*, the sprightly Talent of Mr. *Despreaux*, tho’ I reject most of his Opinions, because they were not enlighten’d by Philosophy, from which the natural Heat of his Imagination kept him back, for which he did not study, but remained perfectly ignorant of it.

Our Language then is much in the right to demand Satisfaction of Madam *D.* for the Injury she has done it, by her Remarks in *Vol. III. (p. 597)* where she speaks thus: “ It is in these Particulars  
“ which we now esteem so trifling, that  
“ Poetry appears to its greatest Advantage; for nothing can be nobler or  
“ finer, than to express elegantly the  
“ most minute Things. This is the  
“ Happiness of the *Greek Tongue*, which  
“ our

upon HOMER's Iliad. 621

“ our Language has not : For almost all  
“ proper Words, especially those of Arts  
“ and Sciences, are either low and flat,  
“ or of a very disagreeable Sound, and  
“ it has nothing to maintain or support  
“ them, which absolutely ruins Poetry.”

Indeed I can't very well tell, whether it  
be thro' want of Justice or Knowledge,  
that Madam *D.* attacks the Arts and  
Sciences, which, as I have before re-  
mark'd, are the main Strength and Sup-  
port of our Language. In short, our  
Terms of Art are so far from being flat,  
or of a disagreeable Sound, that on the  
contrary, I maintain, that no Language  
expresses it self more nobly and harmoni-  
ously than ours, in this Respect. In  
Matter of Painting and Sculpture, for  
Example, there are no Descriptions or  
Characters in the most polite Authors,  
that can be writ in a more perfect Stile,  
than The Judgments upon the Painters,  
which are at the End of the Poem of  
*Dufrenoy*, translated by Mr. *Du Pile*: The  
Force of Painting of the same Mr. *Du*  
*Pile*; his Lives of the Painters; and a-  
bove all, the Discourses of Mr. *Felibien*,  
upon the same Subject; are inexhausti-  
ble Sources of Expression, equally noble,  
fine, and harmonious. Nothing is more  
proper than this sort of Works, not  
only



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only to elevate the Mind and Imagination of a young Writer, but also to enrich and perfect his Stile. Thus it is that the Lovers of our Country, our Age, and our Language, are not ready to believe that we have none but low and disagreeable Words to express the Arts. Even Poetry draws from hence some of its most precious Ornaments. With what agreeable and touching Scenes has the Idea of the *Masque of the Arts* furnish'd Mr. *Lamot* ? With what Elegancy has Mr. *De Fontenelle* touch'd the Origin of Painting, in the Epistle of *Dibutadis* to *Polemon* ? But to crown all our Examples, which vould never end, I shall alledge the Glory of the Dome *Du Val de Grace*, compos'd by *Moliere*, in which he has not omitted one single Term of Painting, and which is an excellent Piece of Poetry ; let it be judg'd by the Persual of this Piece, whether our Terms of Art are low and disagreeable, or whether as Madam *D.* accuses us, we don't know how to maintain by Epithets, or Turns of Phrase, those which of themselves are not of Weight enough. Thus tho' we don't burden our Poems with Descriptions or Trifles, as *Homer* does, it is not that we want noble and harmonious Terms, but because we don't approve of the Descriptions

upno HOMER's Iliad. 623

scriptions of inanimate Objects, unless they present to the Mind something particular. In this we follow the Precept of Mr. Despreaux, who tells us,

*Mais ne vous chargez point d'un détail ennuyeux.*

And we avoid, conformably to his Advice, the Ridiculousness of that Author.

*Qui compte des Plafons, les ronds, & les ovales;*

*Ce ne sont que Festons, ce ne sont qu'Astragales.\**

*Festons* and *Astragales* are fine Words in our Language, which nevertheless we reject, when they come improperly: But besides, nothing raises more the Discourse, than a Word of an Art or Science plac'd in such a Manner, that the Situation alone explains it; and that the Reader judges, by the Place where it is put, that it can signify nothing else.

But perhaps they will allow us the Terms drawn from liberal Arts, and restrain the Reproach of Meanness to

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\* *The Art of Poet.* of Mr. Despreaux.

those

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those which are taken from the Uses of Life, of which *Homer* is full. To this I immediately answer, That it is false to imagine, that we cannot admit of Words that serve to the Description of the ancient Sacrifices, because these Words bear much Resemblance to the servile Functions of our Kitchens. Thus we very nobly express, Blood, Fat, and the Entrails of a slaughter'd Victim. In short, with Respect to the most vile Things, we have sometimes Ways of Changing the mean and base Terms, into others full as proper, which renders the Description not only supportable, but so much the more charming and agreeable, as we are herein sensible of the Art and Contrivance of the Writer, who expresses very clearly what he pleases in a very delicate Language. Madam *D.* her self is a perfect Mistress of this Art: I need no other Proof than a Passage in the *Iliad*, the most noted of that Sort of Descriptions. Madam *D.* in the Remarks that answer to this Passage, Vol. 3. (p. 470.) complains very unjustly of her Language, which herein she has been so much oblig'd to, that it is one of the Pieces the best writ in the whole Translation: It is in the 18th B. (p. 129.) "*Achilles*  
" speaks;



upon HOMER's Iliad. 625

“ speaks ; and at the same Time orders  
“ his Companions to heat some Water  
“ to wash the Body of *Patroclus*, and  
“ cleanse it from the Blood and Dust  
“ with which 'twas cover'd. This Or-  
“ der is immediately perform'd ; a large  
“ Copper Vessel is fix'd upon the Fire,  
“ in an Instant the Flames surround it,  
“ and the Water bubbles ; they busy  
“ themselves with washing the Body,  
“ they perfume it with precious Oils,  
“ they fill his Wounds with an exquisite  
“ Balm ; and after having plac'd it upon  
“ a Bed of State, they cover it with a  
“ rich Stuff, and throw over it a Sheet  
“ of transcendent White ; the *Thessalians*  
“ watch round about him, and mourn  
“ along with *Achilles*.”

Nevertheless, I don't disown that our Language has many mean and base Terms, but this is a Mark of its Delicacy ; it has also many of a mean Use, and all this contributes to characterise its different Stiles: But we must not think that this Difference proceeds from Sound, as Madam D. so often affirms ; it proceeds, with Respect to certain Things, as the Parts of a human Body, from Terms equally us'd, some of which are more or less vulgar, and others more or less decent or polite. But this

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Difference arises yet oftener from another Reason, which Madam D. her self insinuates, (*Vol. II. p. 448.*) viz. that certain Affairs, as the dressing of Victuals is now allotted to Servants; and this Reason is so just, that were we to speak *Greek* in *France*, maintaining at the same Time our present Manners and Customs, many of *Homer's* Terms wou'd become flat and insipid, and we shou'd not be able to make Use of them in Discourses that demand a Grandeur of Expression, since we cannot introduce the Thing itself. *Homer* is not at all to be blam'd for making Use of these, and Persons of Judgment and Understanding will never condemn him for describing these Sort of Functions, which Men of the first Rank in his Time thought no Dishonour to them; or if they condemn it, it will only be upon Account of the Repetition of these Descriptions, or their descending into a long Detail of Trifles, that afford nothing particular to the Minds of Men. And an incontestable Proof that it is the Difference of our Manners, and not the Sound of those Words, that render them mean, is, that they appear very noble in another Sense. I acknowledge, that the *Pois*, signifying Pulse, is very mean,

as

upon HOMER's Iliad. 627

as Madam D. reproaches us, (2. 564.) but it is very noble in this other Sense, that *Racine* has employ'd it in his *Méridates*.

*Après cinq ans d'ennuy dont tu sçais tout  
le pois.*

*Quoy je puis respirer pour la premiere fois.*

On the contrary, we have Words very sonorous, by the Number and Variety of their Syllables, whose Signification is nevertheless very base and mean, as *Cremaliere* and *Casseroles*, which are equivalent to *κράμυροι* and *ἐπέβινθοι*, which Madam D. opposes to Peas and Beans, (*ibid.*) and which we yet never make Use of in a grave or serious Discourse: But among a small Number of rough and harsh Words that are found in the *French*, as in the *Greek* and *Latin*, there is not one that can be excluded Poetry upon the Account of its Sound; because in our Language, as in every other, it is the right Mixture of smooth and harsh Words, as those that are short with others that are long, that cause the Harmony of the entire Phrase. Madam D. says,\* that tho' we change as much

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\* *The Causes of the Corrupt. of Taste*, p 338.



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as we please the Sense of the Word *Porc*, we shall never make it other than a harsh and disagreeable Syllable. I own, that it is harsh, without allowing it upon that Account to be disagreeable; but I maintain, that were this Word plac'd among others more smooth and sweet, it would not hurt the Verse but by its Signification. The Word *Rock*, which is much of the same Nature, has been employ'd by Mr. *Despreaux*, who says, \* *As much Space of Air as a Man sees from a high Rock*. Concerning the Words *Bouvier* and *Vache*, which Madam D. instances as harsh and disagreeable Words, both of themselves and for their Sound, I shall take the Liberty to deny her Proposition. *Bouvier* is compos'd of two Syllables, very full and sonorous; *Vache* sounds a little meaner, but did ever any one scruple making use in Verse of the Word *Vache*, which resembles it perfectly well. It is then nothing but the Idea of the Signification that excludes these Words from the great, and even from the middle Poetry: Those of *Pastour* and *Génisse*, which Madam D. † substitutes in their room, as better and smoother, are preferable to them, not so much upon

\* *Translat. of Longin.*

† *Ibid.* 396.

upon HOMER'S Iliad. 629

the Account of Sound, as a more advantageous Signification of the same Thing; for a very little Difference is sufficient to fix very different Impressions upon the Minds of Men. *Pasteur*, without mentioning the romantick Idea that accompanies it, represents a Man that takes care of Sheep and Lambs, Animals not so gross and bulky as an Ox. *Genisse* represents a young Heifer, better made and more beautiful than those that bear the Yoke. Madam D. says, (*ibid.* 337.) that *Vacca* is used in *Latin*, even in Epic Poems, but that the Word *Vache* is improper in any Poetry. To this I return two Answers; first, that in *Italy*, where the *Latin* Poets wrote, Cows might have been much finer shaped than in this Climate, as the Asses of the East are more beautiful than ours: Secondly, that we have more Politeness and Delicacy than the *Latins*, who had more than the *Greeks*; it is for this Reason that *Virgil* in his *Eclogues* has not introduc'd a Swine Herd, tho' *Homer* has taken one to represent one of the principal Persons of his *Odyssee*.

But to speak of something more important than this; the Effect of Words depends very much upon the general Sense of the Phrase wherein they are employ'd,

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employ'd. *Cicero* somewhere affirms it to be almost impossible to find any Harmony in a Language we don't understand; nothing can be intelligible to us Moderns, which is not reasonable and judicious. The finest Words in the World appear mean and harsh to us, when they contain any thing false and absurd. *Madam D.* had a great deal of Reason for not translating of *Homer* literally, when he says, \* "That we saw approach the  
 " valiant Son of *Tydeus*, who triumphantly pushes on full drive his  
 " fiery Coursers, through Drops of  
 " Dust with which he is cover'd:" Because indeed the Idea of the Word *Drop*, and that of *Dust*, can never agree. But this Word *Drop*, which she had much Reason to find very mean, and in the room of which she has very judiciously substituted that of *Torrent*, and wou'd have done still better had she inserted that of *Cloud*, is admirable in these Verses of *Aty's*, where it is very properly employ'd.

*L'onde se fait une route,  
 En s'efforçant d'en chercher,  
 L'eau qui tombe goutte à goutte  
 Perce le plus dur rocher.*

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\* Rem. of *Madam D.* 3. 580.



upon HOMER's Iliad. 631

Our Language, for Example, is capable of expressing perfectly well "the  
" Lion's letting fall the Skin that is over  
" his Eye-lids, and therewith covering  
" his Eyes, that he may'nt see the Danger."  
These Terms are not of themselves so mean as Madam D. affirms, (3. 493.) but this Discourse is not at all agreeable to us, because it is false, and contrary to an Anatomical Observation. But, setting that aside; if the Lion, as he went to Battle, wou'd hide from himself the Danger, the Objects would also be invisible; and if he was unhappily going to entangle himself, and wou'd neither see the Object nor the Danger, he had no more to do than to shut his Eye-lids themselves. If *Homer*, as Madam D. here boasts, had known the Manners and Customs, or rather the Anatomy of Animals, he wou'd have been sensible that it is only in Birds that the internal Membrane of the Eye-lid is moveable, and which falls like a little transparent Curtain, for the Defence of their Eyes, when they hop between the Branches of the Trees; whereas Beasts that have four Feet have in the Corner of the Eye an immoveable Membrane, which the Eye now and then repairs to, to moisten itself. In short,  
tho'

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tho' it is not requir'd for a Poet to be a Philosopher by Profession, and that in certain Things it may be allow'd him to follow the Current of popular Opinions ; yet nothing contributes more to his Honour and Reputation, than when we see by his Expressions that he is not ignorant of Natural Philosophy, and much more so, when he himself instructs his Reader therein. This is what *Tasso* incomparably well perform'd in his 20th *Canto*, Stan. 55. where he compares the Sword of *Rinaldo* to the Tongue of a Serpent.

*Qual tre lingue vibrar sembra il serpente,  
Che la prestezza d'una il persuade,  
Tal credea lui la sbigottita gente,  
Con la rapida man girar tre spade :  
L'occhio al moco deluso il falso crede,  
E'l terrore à que' mostri accresse fede.*

So far from giving into a vulgar Error, he refuses it, and founds his Comparison upon the Fact itself, physically explain'd.

Madam D. upon a Passage in the 17th B. where *Homer* (p. 61.) speaks of a Lion that had seiz'd a Bull, (which in the Greek is only a Cow) complains of having been oblig'd to translate the  
Verse

upon HOMER's Iliad. 633

Verse 63, τὸν δ' ἔξ αὐχένος ἔκχε, by these Words, *after having broken his Neck*:

" I am sorry, *says she*, (3. 436.) that  
" our Language is not able to express  
" this more nobly; but I chose rather  
" to put it in common Terms, than to  
" leave it out; for this Particular shews  
" that *Homer* was perfectly well ac-  
" quainted with the Manners and Cu-  
" stoms of Animals: The Lion, as soon  
" as he seizes a Bull, first begins to  
" break his Neck, because the Head of  
" the Bull is what he most fears." I

own, that to break a Neck is a very mean and base Expression: But why is it so? Because it is not just; for of all the Parts of the Neck, there are properly none but the turning Joints that are liable to a Rupture, which are not the principal Parts. If I had been to translate this Passage, I shou'd have said nothing more but that the Lion strangled the Bull, for this Term is sufficiently noble for Animals. But if *Madam D.* had found in her Author any one that had been strangled, which *Homer* wou'd without doubt have express'd by the most simple Term, she wou'd yet have complain'd of the Meanness and Poor-ness of our Language, in which she cou'd have found nothing to express

T t

nobly



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nobly and poetically this sort of Death. This did not at all puzzle *Racine*, who from it has composed two of the finest Verses in his *Bajazet*, when he makes *Atalida* say, after having lost her Lover,

*Moy seule j'ai tissé le lien malheureux,  
Dont tu viens d'éprouver les détestables  
nœuds.*

To conclude ; I dare affirm, to the Advantage of our Language, that I look upon it as a wonderful Sieve that will let all that is good in the Ancients pass thro', but stops all that is bad. *Boileau* somewhere says,

*Le Latin dans les vers brave l'honnêteté ;*

but we may very well say, that the Greek offends Reason. To be capable of judging of the Expression or Poetry of *Homer*, we must certainly read him in his own Language ; but to judge of his Genius and the Degree of his Understanding, we must read him in ours, which of all others is most capable of expressing his Thoughts to the greatest Advantage. We ought not to be surpriz'd that *Madam D.* could not look upon *Homer*, even in her own Translation,

upon HOMER's Iliad. 635

tion, without being often offended at the Blemishes that yet remain, notwithstanding all the Care and Pains she has taken to redress them. This Misfortune does not proceed from Indigency, Meanness, or Want of Harmony, in our Language; but from its being accustomed to just Thoughts, equitable Sentiments, and polite Expressions, whereby it resists and refuses all that *Homer* wou'd assert, and groans under Discourses void of Reason, Humanity, or Decorum. All this was pass'd by among the *Greeks*, upon the Account of the Harmony they found, or were resolv'd to find, in *Homer*; which has establish'd amongst them the Reputation of this Poet, which a blind Prejudice and Partiality, drawn from their Example, hath spread every where thro'out. *Cato* the Censor\* was perfectly well acquainted with the general Mind of the *Grecians*, and how much Value they set upon the Sound of Words, when he said, That Words proceeded from the Lips of the *Grecians*, and from the Heart of the *Romans*; to which I add, to finish the Parallel, That in true Moderns it proceeds from the Bottom of Reason and Understanding: I leave it to Men of

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\* *Plut. in Catone.*

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Sense to put in their true Rank these three different Sources of the Eloquence of the *Greeks*, the *Latins*, and the *French*, and to judge of the Mortification which Mr. D.\* gives the present Age, in these Words: "We have nothing that is perfect or finish'd, or that can enter into a Comparison with the noble Works of ancient *Greece*; which always excel ours, at least in these Particulars, viz. the Composition and Ranging of the Terms." If the *Grecians* and the *French*, remaining still as they are, were only to change Times, wou'd not a *Grecian* Critick say to his Countrymen with more Justice, both as to Sense and Phrase, notwithstanding the Composition and Order of our Terms, We have nothing perfect or finish'd, or that can enter into a Comparison with the excellent Works of ancient *France*, as to the essential Part of our Discourse, that is to say, the Choice of Thoughts, and the Manner of Reasoning?

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\* *Arist. Poet.* p. 353.

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